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# Magus of the Library

Mitsu Izumi

Based on *Kafna of the Wind* by Sophie Schwimm
Translated by Hiroto Hamada

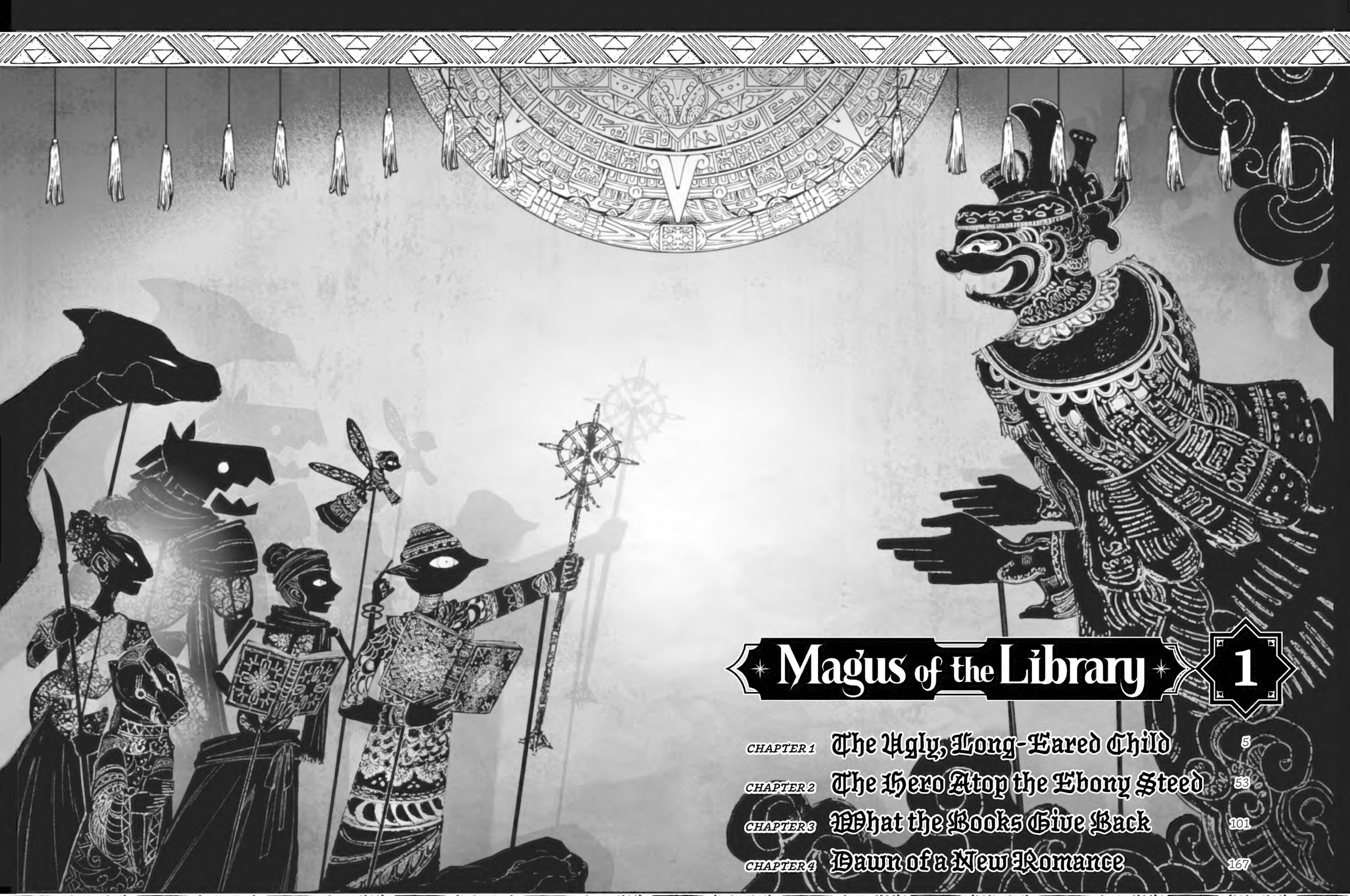
# Magus of the Library

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*"This story is dedicated to my champion."*

—Sophie Schwimm
Opening line of ***Kafna of the Wind***

Written texts...

...legacies linking the past to the future.

...compilations of symbols conveying thought itself...

Collections of crystallized knowledge...

In the words of a certain magus...

...to protect the world itself."

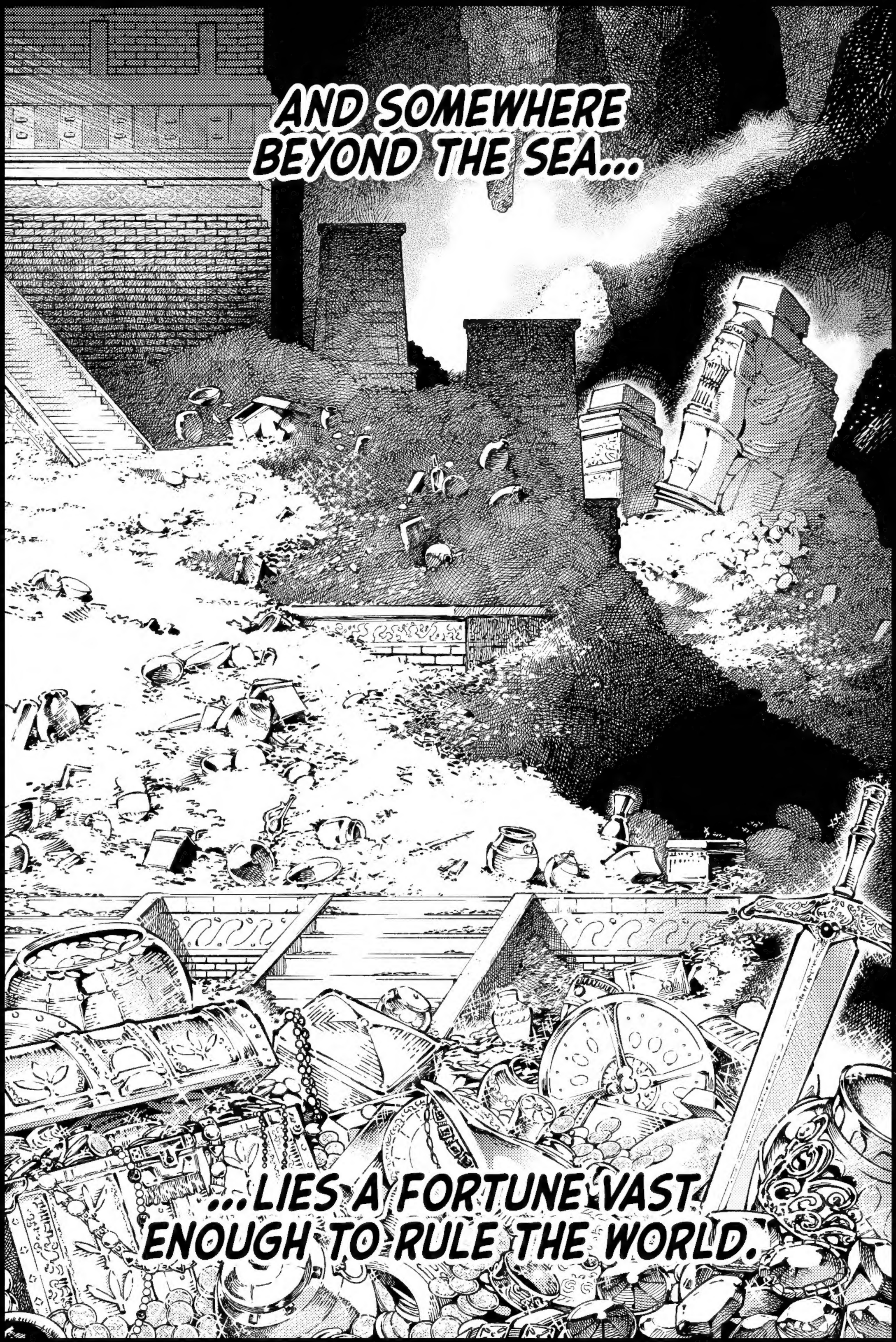
...is...

"To protect a text...

# Magus of the Library

# 1 The Ugly, Long-Eared Child


THERE'S AN EBONY STEED THAT RACES ACROSS THE HEAVENS...
...A MONSTROUS FOWL OF LEGEND WHO GUARDS A PRICELESS GEM...
...A FIENDISH SPIRIT ABLE TO GRANT ONE THE POWER OF A MIGHTY KING...
...AND A GREAT LORD OF THE OCEAN, ABLE TO SWALLOW SHIPS WHOLE.


AND SOMEWHERE BEYOND THE SEA...
...LIES A FORTUNE VAST ENOUGH TO RULE THE WORLD.

TODAY BEGINS MY JOURNEY TO FIND THEM ALL!



I CANNOT ALLOW YOU TO DO THIS !!

STOP, PRINCE !!

CLOMP

SPRING

SORRY, HAMES!

THUMP

CURSE YOU, SHAG-RAZ-ZAT!

YOU MAY HAVE DRIVEN THAT BAND OF THIEVES FROM OUR CITY WALLS, BUT TO LEAD OUR YOUNG PRINCE *ASTRAY...!*

DON'T BLAME HIM! *I* JUST HAPPENED TO DISCOVER ...

...HOW WIDE AND EXCITING OUR WORLD REALLY IS!

AND I'M OFF TO START MY ADVENTURE!

FWSSSH

SLUSH

CLINK

PANT

HAH! YOU MADE IT...

...LITTLE PRINCE.

PANT

I'M FINALLY OFF ...!!

FWHSS

I'M OFF...!

DN-

DN..

CLAIM YOUR PLACE AMONG SHAGRAZZAT'S PIRATE CREW!

HOIST YOURSELF ABOARD.

GRAB!

CREEP..

...TO START MY ADVEN-TURE !!

B-DIMP

HUH?

B-DIMP

AH...

...AH!

WHA...

HERE YOU ARE AGAIN !!

YOU LITTLE SCOUNDREL !

LIFT!

?!!

WHOA...

WH...



*UNBELIEVABLE!* SNEAKING IN AND PAWING THROUGH OUR COLLECTION, AGAIN! HOW MANY TIMES HAS IT BEEN, NOW?!

SWIPE

OOF!

WHUMP!

WHACK

OH NO!

WHAM

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S ABOUT TO GET BENT UP!!

GOOD THING IT DIDN'T GET BENT UP...

THAT WAS CLOSE ...

OWW...

THUD!

*Books...*

*Long have they fascinated. Countless souls have they charmed. In days past, books were prized as highly as mountains of gold.*

*...tools born to transmit ideas from one mind to another.*

*Thus was born the first library.*

*There is a tale of a king who amassed texts from all across the world at great expense. He placed them on display inside a spacious manor, bragging of his collection to other rulers.*

*With the advent of the printing press, books have become more affordable, and within reach of the common people.*

*Much time has passed since then.*

*... stands a small public library, proudly serving the members of its community.*

*Such that even here, in the village of Amun...*

OW!

OOF!

*How-ever...*

*...there is one boy here who is not allowed to use it...*

FLING!

ACK!

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU?

IT *DOESN'T* EXTEND TO YOU VERMIN LIVING OUT IN THE *SLUMS.*

THIS LIBRARY IS A FREE SERVICE PROVIDED TO THE *VILLAGERS.*

*CARETAKER OF THE AMUN LIBRARY*

**OSSEI MENES**

KRNCH

HONESTLY. IF YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH FREE TIME TO BE DALLYING WITH BOOKS, THEN YOU SHOULD PUT YOURSELF TO *WORK*, YOU IMPOVERISHED RUNT.


SHOVE
ABSOLUTELY ABSURD...!
HAVING A LONG-EARED OUTSIDER LIKE *THAT* IN HERE...!

ど
ど
IMP
IMP

から
ん
ding-
dong

から
ん
ding-
dong

COME ON!

YEA!

chatter
chatter
chatter

WE'LL BE STARTING CLASS NOW.

YES, TEACHER!

ALL RIGHT. FIND YOUR SEATS.

*...lifeless, pale skin...*

*...and a pair of dreadfully ugly, long, pointed ears.*

*The boy had eyes the color of moss...*

*...distasteful blond hair...*

*And the boy had no idea...*

*...why he looked so different from the other children.*

STOP! THIEF !!

TMP TMP TMP

chatter

chatter

BUSTLE わい

BUSTLE わい

FLICK FLICK

SWIPE

DID YOU SEE? IT WAS A CHILD FROM THE SLUMS AGAIN!

*SOMEBODY* NEEDS TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT PLACE!

UM, PARDON ME...

THIS WAS LYING ON THE GROUND !

WHUMP

OOF!

HEARD YA BROKE INTO THE LIBRARY AGAIN!

HEY! *LONG-EARS!*

YOU'RE THE ONLY KID FROM THE SLUMS WHO SHOWS UP!

HEY, WHY DO YOU EVEN COME TO SCHOOL, ANYWAY ?!

KRASH

DON'T YOU KNOW PEOPLE FROM THE *SLUMS* AREN'T ALLOWED INSIDE THERE?!

SLAM

COUGH

COUGH

WELL, THAT'S NO GOOD!

*HIS REAL NAME NO ONE KNOWS OR CARES!*

*WE ALL JUST CALL HIM "LONG-EARS" !*

*NOTHING BUT THOSE BIG, LONG EARS!*

*NOT ONE FRIEND !*

*NO COIN TO SPEND !*

HURRY! LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!

BEFORE WE CATCH ANY OF HIS LONG-EAR GERMS!

AHAHAHAHAHAHA



...

UH... YEAH...

RUMMAGE RUMMAGE

...OH, HEY, WE WANTED TO ASK...

HEY!

ON YOUR WAY BACK FROM SCHOOL ?

REALLY ?!

I'D BE HAPPY TO!

UM!

YEAH!

COULD YOU READ THIS FOR US? WE DON'T KNOW HOW.

CRMMP... フニャ

PFF! LOOK AT HIS FACE! AHAHA HA!

"Long-Eared Freak"

*The Adventures of Shagrazzat was the story of a noble pirate. His tales had become quite popular all across the continent.*

CRUMPLE...

WHY'S HE STILL LIVING *HERE*, ANYWAY, IF HE'S ALWAYS GOING TO THAT FANCY *SCHOOL* OF HIS?

HA HA HA...

*... they were joined by new faces, with whom they continued their travels.*

*As they helped solve problems on each of the islands they visited...*

*Shagrazzat and his crew traveled the high seas, hoping to claim the world as their own.*

HAH! I LIKE YOUR SPIRIT.

COME. JOIN ME ON MY TRAVELS.

*The stories ...*

*...gave the boy hope.*

*...a hero would appear before him, too, and whisk him away from his awful life.*

*He felt certain that someday...*

*...someday...*

*...a hero would come...*

*...that someday...*

*He believed ...*

The Slums

TIFA? YOU HERE?

...GUESS SHE MUST BE OUT WORKING.

HEY, I'M HOME.

*The boy lived in the slums with his elder sister.*

*And his sister, determined to allow the boy time to attend school...*

*...worked in a tea garden in the mornings, and on a farm in the afternoons. The evenings she spent on embroidery jobs.*

*Once— and only once— the boy had asked her about it.*

"Dear sister..."

"...why must I go to school?"

"I needn't study in order to find work."

"I wish for you the choices in life that I never had in mine."

"Simple, my brother. You see, I can neither read nor write."

"If you but learn to unlock the secrets of books...

...you can carry yourself to any place you wish to go."






IS EVERYONE DOING WELL TODAY ?

HELLO, ALL!

PHEW. MADE IT.

RUSTLE RUSTLE

POUNCE

WHOA, THERE!

YOU'VE GOTTA LET ME DO MY HOMEWORK! I NEED TO FINISH WHILE IT'S STILL LIGHT OUT.

PANT

PANT

HEY! KUKUO!

EEP

You finished?

PHEW...

AHH...!

GO

SPRAWL

SKRT

THE VIEW UP HERE SURE IS GREAT, ISN'T IT?

AAAAND... DONE!

WAY OUT THAT WAY, BEYOND THE HORIZON.

IT'S A CITY FILLED WITH PEOPLE WHO LOVE BOOKS.

THEY SAY THAT THE LIBRARY THERE...

...HAS A COPY OF EVERY BOOK IN THE ENTIRE WORLD.

PEOPLE GATHER FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TO USE IT.

SO THERE'S GOTTA BE ALL KINDS OF DIFFERENT RACES THERE.

YOU KNOW WHAT'S OUT THERE?

AFTZAAK. THE CITY OF BOOKS.

BWUEE!

I KNOW. I KNOW. YOU'VE HEARD THIS ALL BEFORE.

Sorry, Buddy.

...NOBODY WOULD EVEN THINK TWICE ABOUT MY EARS.

I BET IF I WENT THERE...

BUT, BOY...

...I SURE WOULD LIKE TO VISIT...

...A BIG LIBRARY SOMEDAY.

I MADE IT UP JUST NOW. MY NEW LIBRARY SONG!

YOU LIKE THAT ?

...

...THE CITY OF BOOKS...!

OH, AFTZAAK...

AFTZAAK, A LIBRARY GREAT...

... COLLECTION FIRST-RATE! BECAUSE IT'S...

...THE BOOK ON YOUR MIND. AND I HOPE...

...AFTZAAK, THE PLACE YOU CAN FIND...

SMOOSH

...SOME-DAY, MY FRIEND...

...THAT SOME-DAY...

...A DAY IN...

...I'LL GET TO SPEND...

...AAAFT-ZAAK...

KRNCH

THIS MUST BE AMUN.

AT LONG LAST. IT'S BEEN QUITE A JOURNEY FROM AFTZAAK.



'CAUSE YOU DON'T STAND A *CHANCE!*

K-CLIP K-CLIP

HEY! STOP! NO FAIR !!

Hmph..

A RACE? WHAT'S THE POINT?

HEY, SE-DONA!

BET I CAN BEAT YOU INTO TOWN!

CLIP

TSK! WELL *YOU'RE* NO FUN!

UGH. HOW CHILDISH...

*Be careful not to trip!*

OH, DEAR ...

*GRRR! GET BACK HERE !!!*

FWSH

SPLSH

AHAHAHAHAHAHA!

NOW THAT WE'VE WASHED IT OFF, MAYBE THE COLOR'LL GO BACK TO NORMAL!

YOUR FACE IS SO WHITE, WE FIGURED IT MUST BE COVERED IN CHALK!

AWW. HE'S STILL ALL PALE!

HEY, YOU THINK MAYBE IT WASN'T CHALK AFTER ALL?!

CLUNK

*THANK GOODNESS. THEY DIDN'T GET WET.*

*OH NO, MY TEXT-BOOKS!*

BULLS-EYE!

WHATCHA GONNA DO, HUH?

OOH. SOMEONE LOOKS ANGRY.

WHISPER WHISPER ひそ ひそ

SHOULDN'T SOMEBODY STOP THEM?

LEAVE THEM BE.

IT'S JUST THE *LONG-EARED* BOY.

KA-LUNK
KA-LUNK

KRNCH
KRNCH
SOMEDAY...
SOMEDAY...

LOOK. HE'S CRYING!
WELL THAT'S NOT VERY PO-LITE.
*IGNORING* US AFTER WE TRIED TO HELP YOU OUT.

...I'M SURE...
...A HERO WILL...

AS IF YOU'RE EVER GONNA GET ANY BETTER!
WORKIN' SO HARD JUST SO A BRAINLESS FREAK LIKE YOU CAN GO TO SCHOOL.
PAUSE..
MAN, YOUR SISTER SURE IS ***STUPID***, THOUGH.

...

WHAT THE MATTER, BIROU?

BIFF

CLOP CLOP

CLIP CLIP

KRNCH

...HUH?

SAY WHAT YOU WANT ABOUT ME...

CLENCH

...ABOUT WHAT SHE GOES THROUGH TO SEND ME TO SCHOOL!

YOU DON'T KNOW THE *FIRST THING* ...

...MAKE FUN OF MY SISTER!

...BUT DON'T YOU *DARE*...

SHOVE

I CAN'T *HEAR* YOU WITH THAT PUNY VOICE OF YOURS!

...

WHAT'S THAT?! SPEAK UP!

PLUCK..

HEH!

NO! DON'T!

THEY COST US SO MUCH...!

GET HIS TEXTBOOKS! HE WON'T SHOW UP TO SCHOOL ANYMORE IF WE *RIP* 'EM UP!

LUNGE

!

WHA?

HUH?!

Hiyo!

WHAT'S GOING—

EHHFFF

...THERE'S NO CHOICE BUT TO HAVE IT OUT.

AND SOMETIMES WHEN THEY HAPPEN...

DISAGREE-MENTS ARE A FACT OF LIFE.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO FIGHT, THEN FIGHT FAIR.

HOWEVER, THERE'S NO HONOR IN GANGING UP ON SOMEONE.

WAIT! DON'T FORGET ME!!

LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!

THAT HORSE IS HUGE!!

THIS IS BAD!

U-UH...

TH...

THANK YOU...

V-V...

VERY MUCH...

KRNCH

YOU DON'T QUITE FIT IN AROUND HERE, DO YOU?

IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, THIS IS A *HYRON* VILLAGE.

LAUGH AT THEM?

PERISH THE THOUGHT!

SO YOU'RE GONNA...

...LAUGH AT MY EARS, TOO?

FWP

THE HERO OF A STORY IS ALWAYS A BIT DIFFERENT FROM EVERYONE ELSE.

IF ANYTHING, I'D SAY THOSE EARS SUIT YOU QUITE WELL. THEY'RE *UNIQUE.*

HUH ...?

SEE YOU AROUND, BOY!

OH! BY THE WAY, MY NAME'S SEDONA!

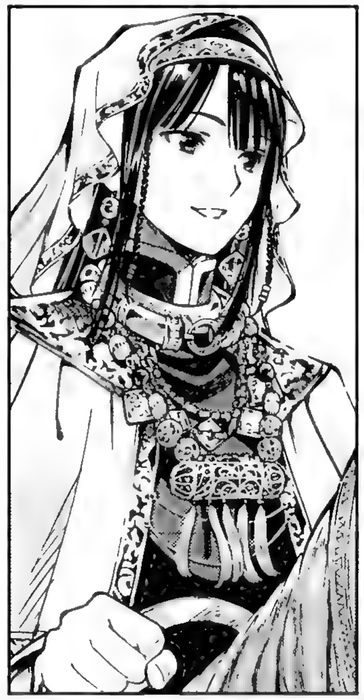
AH. FOR-GIVE ME.

SEDONA, THERE YOU ARE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?




"KAFNA" ...?
A...
...that...
...some-day...


He'd believed with all his heart...
THOSE ARE... KAFNA ...!
LIBRAR-IANS ...!



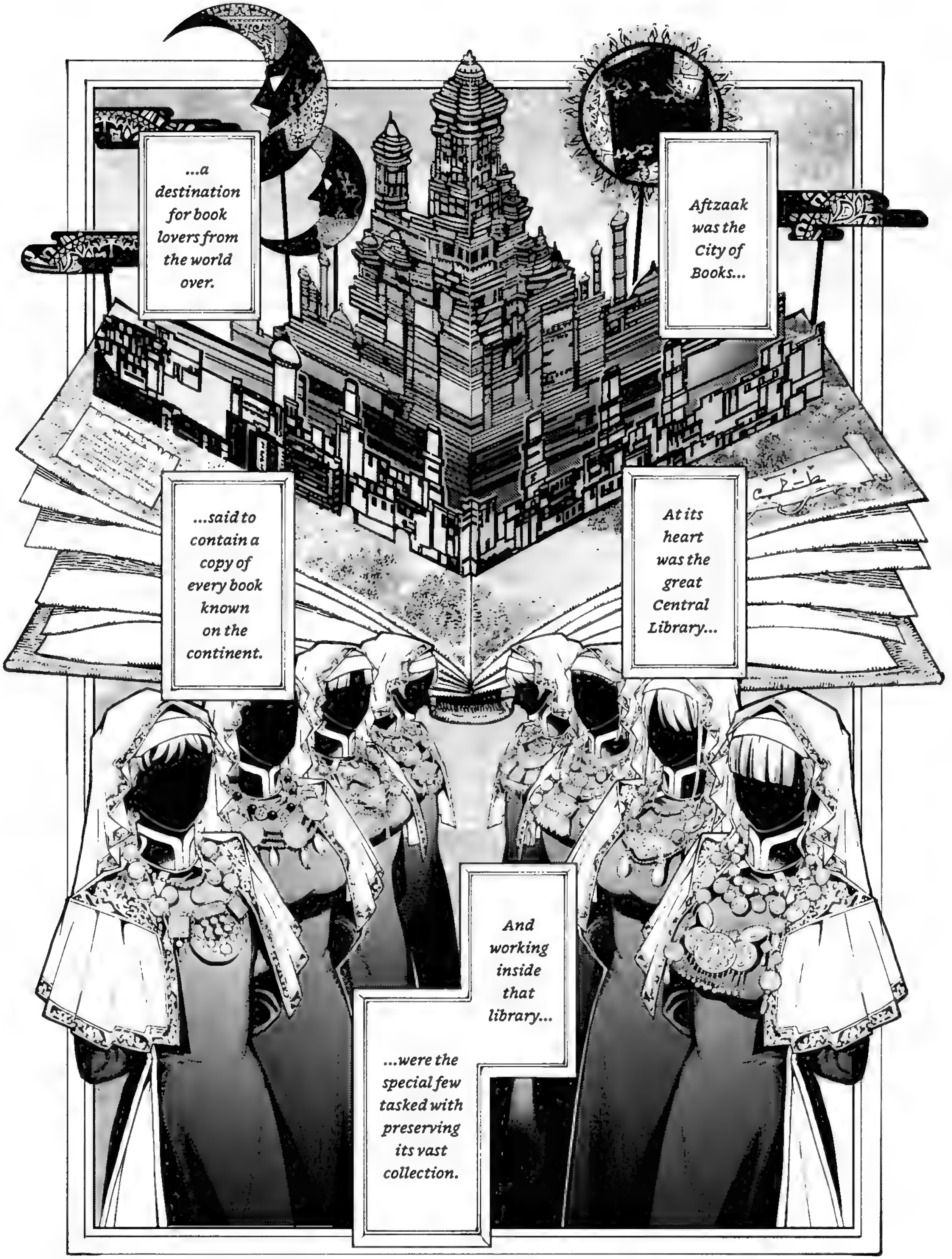

We're really stand out...
We are causing quite the fuss, aren't we?

...some-
day...

...a hero
would
come for
him.

# Magus of the Library


Kukuo


...a destination for book lovers from the world over.
Aftzaak was the City of Books...
...said to contain a copy of every book known on the continent.
At its heart was the great Central Library...
And working inside that library...
...were the special few tasked with preserving its vast collection.

*To the people, they were known simply as the kafna.*

# 2 The Hero Atop the Ebony Steed

I'M TERRIBLY ASHAMED I COULDN'T PROVIDE A MORE FITTING WELCOME!

Whoa! Check out this horse!

MY, BUT YOU MUST BE TIRED FROM YOUR LONG JOURNEY!

PLEASE! YOU NEEDN'T TROUBLE YOURSELVES OVER US.

WE AREN'T HERE TO INTERRUPT YOUR USUAL DUTIES.

AS EXPLAINED IN THE LETTER WE SENT, INSPECTION OF THE LIBRARY IS NOT THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF OUR EXPEDITION.

WE SIMPLY THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO DIRECT US TO SOME LOCAL ACCOMMODA-TIONS.

YES, YES, OF COURSE! WE'VE ALREADY ARRANGED ROOMS AT THE VILLAGE'S FINEST INN!

*CENTRAL LIBRARY, LIAISONS OFFICE*

ANZU KAVISHMAF

*And, more importantly, he had his branch's relationship with the Central Library to consider.*

*Pleasing customers had become second nature to him from his long days spent as a merchant.*

YOU! GET THE KAFNA A MAP!

I'LL GO LET THEM KNOW YOU'VE ARRIVED!

*The reason behind the caretaker's obsequity was simple enough.*

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND DISTRIBUTION OF NEW VOLUMES

STRICT OBSERVANCE OF LIBRARY POLICIES

*To run these branches, they turned to those local nobles and merchants, offering financial assistance and knowledge about the care of books.*

*These caretakers agreed to abide by a set of principles known as the Library Code, and were thus installed as the heads of their respective branches.*

*Men dreamed of amassing great collections. Nobles and successful merchants invariably turned their attentions to books.*

*This was an age in which possession of many books conferred status and prestige.*

*Meanwhile, the Central Library worked to establish branches throughout the continent, hoping to bring books to as much of the population as could be managed.*

*This small branch in the village of Amun was one such library, constructed through the support of the Central Library.*

I IMAGINE READING IS NOT A COMMON HABIT HERE EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO ARE ABLE.

YES, I'M SURE THAT'S QUITE TRUE.

AND IN A HUMBLE COMMUNITY SUCH AS OURS, I'M AFRAID THERE ARE BUT FEW WHO CAN READ.

WELL, IT'S ONLY BEEN A YEAR SINCE WE OPENED OUR DOORS.

WE'RE STILL NOT SEEING TOO MANY USERS HERE, ARE WE...?

NOTHING IS MORE VITAL THAN MAKING BOOKS A PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE FOR THE ADULTS OF TOMORROW!

Oh, most certainly!

...START WITH THE CHILDREN!

SIMPLY BUILDING A LIBRARY ISN'T ENOUGH TO GET THE PEOPLE READING.

TO ESTABLISH BOOKS AS PART OF DAILY LIFE, WE MUST...

*Librarians at local branches were primarily chosen from among women in the community able to read and write...*

*...as the budget was simply not available to hire men from the intellectual class to fulfill such duties.*

I'M SURE IT'S HARD TO KEEP UP WITH SUCH A LIMITED STAFF, TOO.

WE CAN'T EXPECT LIBRARIANS SO FAR FROM THE CITY TO HAVE ALL THE SAME SKILLS WE DO.

mhhr...

WHAT I'M MOST CONCERNED ABOUT HERE IS THE CONDITION OF THE VOLUMES.

THESE REPAIRS ARE COMPLETELY INADEQUATE!

NOW, NOW, NANAKO.

*The Necessities for Restoration Work*

BOOKSTAND

TWEEZERS

PAPERWEIGHT

BRUSHES

REPAIR TISSUE

STARCH PASTE

LARGE COTTON BALLS

QUITE DEDICATED TO HER CRAFT, I SEE.

THAT'S THE RESTORATIONS OFFICE FOR YOU...

CALL FOR ME WHEN IT IS TIME TO DEPART!

HOLD ON! NANAKO ?!

I DISAGREE! THIS CANNOT BE TOLERATED! I'LL BE USING WHAT TIME I HAVE TO LECTURE THE BRANCH LIBRARIANS ON PROPER TECHNIQUE.

*CENTRAL LIBRARY, RESTORATIONS OFFICE*

NANAKO WATTLE

REPAIRING BOOKS IS THE ESSENCE OF THE LIBRARIAN'S WORK.

THE MOST BASIC PROCEDURE IS THE REPAIR OF A TORN PAGE.

IT INVOLVES APPLYING REPAIR TISSUE* TO REINFORCE THE TORN SECTION.

I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE TRYING YOUR BEST...

...BUT YOU REALLY MUST READ THROUGH THE CARE MANUAL MORE THOROUGHLY.

FLIP

HERE. TAKE A LOOK AT THIS REPAIR.

*REPAIR TISSUE: Thin, translucent paper composed of long, stringy fibers; akin to Japanese *washi* paper.

RIP

THICK

THE ROUGH EDGES AND STRAY FIBERS OF THE TORN PIECE HELP THE REPAIR BLEND INTO THE PAGE.

RATHER THAN CUTTING, TEAR THE TISSUE OUT BY HAND.

BUT WHAT IT ACTUALLY DOES IS MAKE THE REPAIR STAND OUT. THIS ISN'T GOOD TECHNIQUE.

YES, MA'AM. I FIGURED THAT WOULD GIVE IT A CLEANER APPEARANCE.

YOU USED A RAZOR TO CUT OUT THIS PIECE OF TISSUE, DIDN'T YOU?

...AND APPLY PRESSURE WITH THE COTTON BALL WHILE ALSO WIPING AWAY ANY EXCESS GLUE.

SET THE PREPARED STRIP AGAINST THE PAGE ...

FWIP

EXAMINE BOTH SIDES BEFORE APPLYING. MAKE THE REPAIR ON THE LESS CONSPICUOUS SIDE.

AS YOU PASTE, USE PERPENDICULAR STROKES TO PULL THE FIBERS OUT-WARD FROM THE STRIP.

WHEREAS CAREFUL, CONSISTENT REPAIRS TEND TO ENCOURAGE SUBSEQUENT READERS TO TREAT A BOOK MORE KINDLY.

ZOOM ZOOM

EVEN MINOR TEARS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED IMMEDIATELY. UNCARED-FOR BOOKS GET TREATED AS POORLY AS THEY LOOK. IT'S A VICIOUS CYCLE.

WERE YOU ABLE TO GRASP THE TECHNIQUES ?

THAT ONE WAS COMPLETED SLOWLY TO HELP YOU FOLLOW ALONG.

21

?!

AND THAT CONCLUDES THE MOST BASIC REPAIR PROCEDURE.

PLACE A SHEET OF BLOTTING PAPER OVER THE REPAIR, THEN CLOSE THE BOOK AND KEEP IT UNDER THE WEIGHT UNTIL THE GLUE SETS.

*...SHE'S SO DELICATE AND PRECISE... AND YET SHE WORKS SO QUICKLY.*

*THE CENTRAL LIBRARIANS ARE TRULY INCREDIBLE...*

...BUT AS I'VE GONE ON TO SPECIALIZE IN THIS WORK AS PART OF THE RESTORATIONS OFFICE, I MIGHT BE A LITTLE OUT OF TOUCH WITH THE NORM...

EVERY KAFNA COVERS THIS DURING TH INITIAL APPRENTICE-SHIP...

*Shall I run through it once more?*

OH...WAS THAT TOO FAST? MY APOLOGIES.

**THAT WAS WORKING SLOWLY ?!**

*What you did just now?!*

SLIDE

TAP TAP

FLICK FLICK FLICK FLICK

パラパラパラパラ

SNAP

SWISH SWISH SWISH SWISH

ニノ+ニノ+ニノ+ニノ+

きゅぽぽぽぽぽぽぽ

FWOOOOOSH

ALL RIGHT. I'LL USE THESE BOOKS FROM THE RETURNS SHELF TO DEMON-STRATE.

HOW FAST DO YOU *USUALLY* WORK...?!

THERE'S NO WAY !!

OF COURSE, I'M STILL JUST STARTING OUT. THE OLDER CENTRAL LI-BRARIANS ARE A LOT FASTER.

REMEMBER, THERE ARE ALWAYS MORE BOOKS WAITING THEIR TURN!

ULTIMATELY, YOU WANT TO AIM TO WORK AT LEAST THIS QUICKLY.

IT'S NOT FAIR!

IT'S NOT FAIR

NO!

I WANNA KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT!!

YOU HEARD WHAT THE LIBRARIANS SAID!

THERE ARE *LOTS* OF OTHER READERS WAITING FOR THE NEWEST VOLUME OF THE PIRATE STORY! YOU HAVE TO WAIT YOUR TURN!

BUT I CAN'T

FLAIL FLAIL

WAA-A-A!!

YOU KNOW WE CAN'T AFFORD THAT!!

Books are far too expensive!!

THEN BUY ME A COPY AT A BOOK-STORE!

OH, QUIT KICKING UP A FUSS! YOU'RE NOT AT HOME!

IT'S NOT FAIR!

I HATE THIS!

NO!

THERE ARE SO MANY STORIES I WISH I COULD ERASE FROM MY MIND AND EXPERIENCE ALL OVER AGAIN!

*Mm-hm!*

YOU'RE JUST *DYING* TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT, HUH?

OH, BOY, DO I KNOW *THAT* FEELING!

CAN YOU PUT ME AT THE FRONT OF THE WAITING LIST?!

NOPE. YOU'VE GOTTA WAIT LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.

WELL, WHAT USE ARE *YOU*, THEN ?!!

WHY, I'M SEDONA! I'M A LI-BRARIAN FROM FAR AWAY.

AND I'M HERE TO MAKE YOUR TROUBLES GO AWAY!

*CENTRAL LIBRARY, PROTECTIONS OFFICE*

**SEDONA BLEU**

WHO ARE *YOU* SUPPOSED TO BE?!

*You're not from around here!*

HEY! THAT IS NOT POLITE!

A WAY TO MAKE WAITING EASY?

*I* CAN BE OF USE IN SHOWING YOU A WAY TO MAKE WAITING A BREEZE!

*Please. It's no trouble at all*

WHACK

*Eep!*

THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT, NOW!

PLEASE EXCUSE MY SON'S RUDE BEHAVIOR.

SO, WHAT'LL IT BE? A SAGA UNFOLDING AT A SCHOOL OF WIZARDRY ?

A STORY OF TWO BROTHERS MASTERING ALCHEMY ?

HOW ABOUT AN EPIC TALE OF WARRIORS FIGHTING AGAINST HORDES OF GIANTS ?!

HOIST

ALL YOU'VE GOTTA DO IS HEAD OUT ON ANOTHER ADVENTURE!

EEK!

WAIT! HE'S GOING TO GET YOUR NICE CLOTHES ALL DIRTY!

Whoa!

COME! WE'RE OFF TO DISCOVER A WHOLE NEW WORLD!

He's always covered in dirt!

AH, BUT THE ONLY REASON YOU FEEL THAT WAY ...

...IS BECAUSE YOU HAVE YET TO LEARN OF ALL THE OTHER WONDERFUL BOOKS WAITING FOR YOU!

I WANNA READ ABOUT THE ADVEN-TURES OF SHAGRAZ-ZAT!

Ack!

Little brat's hands're filthy!

*The duties of the Central Librarians were many...*

Sedona?! What are you doing?!

You can't go stomping around inside a library!

WH- WHAT A *STRANGE* INDI- VIDUAL ...

I'D ALWAYS IMAGINED KAFNA TO BE MORE... *RESERVED* ...

IT MATTERS NOT! NOTHING INSPIRES ME MORE THAN A CHILD BURSTING WITH THE DESIRE TO READ!

*In brief, they managed books all across the continent.*

*...from maintaining and curating collections, to distributing books across the land.*

*It involved a test that many attempted, but few could pass.*

*To join their ranks was a notoriously difficult task.*

LEAP

?!

H-

HEY!

FWUMP

*Those talented individuals who went on to serve within the Central Library's walls...*

*...were known everywhere they went as* kafna— *keepers of specialized knowledge.*

WOW... KAFNA. LIBRARIANS FROM THE CITY OF BOOKS...

KEKO! STOP THAT!

SAKIYA! THERE YOU ARE!

DON'T *SCARE* ME, KEKO!

I'M AT THE PART WHERE PRINCE KIRI GOES TO JOIN HIM!

WHISPER WHISPER

HOW FAR DID YOU GET IN *SHAG-RAZZAT*?

YEAH! IT REALLY WAS!

WASN'T THE STORY OF THE KING-DOM GREAT?!

BOING

BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE HE'LL BE AWAY UNTIL EVENING TOMORROW.

SORRY. IT SOUNDS LIKE MY DAD'S GONNA BE AROUND ALL DAY TODAY. I DON'T THINK I CAN SNEAK YOU IN.

OH... Darn...

*CARETAKER MENES' DAUGHTER*

**SAKIYA MENES**

...

...

OH...

THANKS FOR ALWAYS SNEAKING ME IN!

ANYWAY, I WOULDN'T WANT HIM CATCHING ME HERE.

TMP

PFF!

WHAT'S THAT ABOUT ?!

I CAN'T WAIT UNTIL THEY PACK UP AND LEAVE.

WHAT A *PAIN...*

HAAH ...

*WHY* CAN'T THEY JUST LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE?

CLEARLY THE CENTRAL LIBRARY'S BEHIND THE POPULARITY OF THAT SHAGRA-WHAT'S-HIS-NAME.

GRUMBLE

WELL, EXCEPT FOR MY DARLING LITTLE SAKIYA, OF COURSE. SHE'S SPECIAL.

*And so clever!*

GRUMBLE

AND IT'S NOT LIKE THEY UNDERSTAND MUCH OF WHAT THEY READ TO BEGIN WITH!

...BUT NOTHING'S HARDER ON A BOOK THAN THE HANDS OF A LITTLE BRAT.

GRUMBLE

ALL THEY TALK ABOUT IS GETTING MORE CHILDREN TO READ ...

GRUMBLE

YES, OF COURSE!

I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!

CARETAKER MENES! I HAVE A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CATALOG!

*Now, where did he disappear to?*

STUB

*Like me...*

BOOKS HAVE BEEN AND ALWAYS WILL BE ITEMS MEANT FOR COLLECTION BY *INTELLIGENT, GROWN MEN.*

WISH I COULD'VE TALKED MORE WITH SAKIYA ...

TROT TROT

SWOOP

FWOOOSH

LOOKS LIKE THE NUKU BIRDS ARE SWOOPING DOWN LOW ...

FWWSH

FWWSH

LOOKS LIKE THEY CAME FROM THE CITY. BET THEY GOT SOME NICE STUFF!

SNEAK コソ

SNEAK コソ

TIME TO DO A LITTLE DIGGING!

YEAH!

THEY WENT OFF SOMEWHERE AND JUST LEFT THEM!

THE VISITORS' BAGS ARE JUST SITTING THERE?

ヒョイ FREEZE...

BAGB

ON SECOND THOUGHT ...

ゴゴゴ HFF!

HFFFF!

SKKT

SKKT

GLARE...

!

bask ホワ

bask ホワ

"KAFNA", HUH?

WONDER IF THEY GET TO READ BOOKS WHILE THEY WORK.

Lucky!

HEY!

THAT'S THE HORSE THAT ...

BFF?

STARE

UM...

UH...!

FLINCH ヒッ

!

KRNCH

BHEE!

THANK YOU FOR HELPING ME OUT EARLIER TODAY!

ANYWAY, THAT'S ALL.

SEE YOU LATER...

...

...

What a cool horse

???

FWOOOSH

FWWSSHH

FWWSSHH

PLUNK

YAWN

BRRP

HEY, DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOUR MASTER WILL GET BACK?

スピー pfff スピー pfff

FIDGET..

ソワ..

GUESS NOT...

INK

LIFT... TOO

B-DMP B-DMP

ALL RIGHT ...

FLICK

*To protect a text ...*

*...is to...*

*... protect the world itself.*

RRRK...

FLICK

SWSHH..



...I JUST CAUGHT THAT!

WHOA! I CAN'T BELIEVE ...

THAT WAS WAAAAY TOO CLOSE!

SWIPE

*So the boy was unsure what had prompted his tears.*

*...and the story had not yet featured any great conflict.*

*He'd only just begun to read...*

READING A STRANGER'S BOOK WITHOUT PERMISSION ?!

TSK, TSK! NAUGHTY, NAUGHTY!

TA-DAH

-Y...

!?!

I...

I'M SORR-

Yes!!

WHAT A REAC-TION!

AHA HA HA HA

YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN YOUR FACE!

I KNEW IT! NEVER SEEN A KOKOPA BEFORE, HAVE YOU ?!

*CENTRAL LIBRARY, RESTORATIONS OFFICE*

**PIPIRI PILBERRY**

SPEAKING OF WHICH, LOOKS LIKE THE BOOK'S OWNER IS COMING BACK NOW.

I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU THE WHOLE TIME.

*I'm in charge of our stuff.*

OH, I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO.

YOU HAVE ?!

?

ﾌﾞﾌﾞﾌﾞﾌﾞ

DAAAZE

UM...

ABOUT THIS...

HM?

YOU'RE THE KID WHO...

HEY! IT'S...

AND HEY, THAT'S MY...

TIME TO MOVE OUR THINGS. THEY FOUND US AN INN.

HEY, PIPIRI!

N...
NO, I...
TREMBLE TREMBLE
...I...
... WOULD NEVER ...!
...THIS KID SHOWED UP AND STARTED *SCRIBBLING* IN IT!
?!!
YOU LEFT YOUR BOOK JUST SITTING THERE, SEDONA.
AND THEN ...
ANYWAY, I SAW THE WHOLE THING. HE WAS READING, BUT HE HANDLED THE BOOK REALLY CAREFULLY.
COME ON. YOU'RE SETTING *TRAPS* NOW?
*You're the one causing mischief!*
IT WAS SO BORING. I WAS TOTALLY READY TO CHEW HIM OUT IF HE CAUSED ANY MISCHIEF.
PIPIRI, YOU REALLY OUGHT TO TONE DOWN THE TEASING.
*You took it way too far. He's so terrified he's shaking!*
HAH HAH HAH
AWW, YOU SAW THROUGH ME?
*It was such a good joke!*
TREMBLE TREMBLE TREMBLE TREMBLE TREMBLE TREMBLE
EXCUSE ME...
UH...
!
I FIGURED IT'D GET RUINED IF I JUST LEFT IT...
IT'S GONNA RAIN SOON, AND...
I JUST HAPPENED TO SEE THE BOOK WHEN I WALKED BY.
I'M REALLY SORRY ABOUT READING WITHOUT PERMISSION.

UM, BUT ...!

I SAW THE BIRDS CHATTERING ABOUT FOOD AND FLYING LOW TO THE GROUND!

THEY ALWAYS DO THAT BEFORE IT RAINS.

UH... THERE ISN'T A CLOUD IN SIGHT.

TWEET

FASCI-NATING ...

CHATTERING ABOUT FOOD?

I DECIDED TO WAIT A WHILE, AND IF YOU DIDN'T COME BACK, I WAS GONNA AT LEAST TAKE THE *BOOK* SOMEWHERE WITH A ROOF.

IT'S BEEN ABOUT AN HOUR SINCE I GOT HERE.

FWOOOSH

*THE GREAT TREE IN THE VILLAGE IS TOUCHED WITH MIST, AND ITS LEAVES ARE RUSTLING.*

*WE CAN'T TELL FROM THE GROUND, BUT THE MOISTURE IN THE UPPER AIR MUST BE GROWING DENSER, AND A STRONG WIND MAY BE CARRYING RAINCLOUDS TOWARD US...*

FWWSSHHH

FWWSSHHH

*...ALONG WITH A SUDDEN, FIERCE, YET PROBABLY SHORT-LIVED SHOWER...*

*EVEN ANTS KNOW TO PLUG UP THE ENTRANCES TO THEIR NESTS BEFORE RAINFALL.*

*AS THE HUMIDITY HIGH UP IN THE SKY INCREASES, INSECT WINGS GROW HEAVY, BRINGING THEM CLOSER TO THE GROUND. THE BIRDS MUST BE AFTER THOSE BUGS.*

*TINY INSECTS ARE QUITE SENSITIVE TO CHANGES IN THE ATMOSPHERE.*

...BY CHECKING THE SHADOWS.

WELL...

...I FIGURE IT OUT...

BUT WAIT... HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S BEEN THAT LONG?

HM. PICKED A LENGTH OF TIME AND EVERY-THING.

I HAVEN'T HEARD ANY CLOCK BELLS, AND YOU DON'T HAVE A WATCH!

YOU CAN'T KEEP TRACK OF TIME WHEN YOU'RE READING A BOOK!

SO I USUALLY PUT DOWN A MARKER TO MEASURE HOW MUCH THE SHADOWS HAVE SHIFTED.

YOU'RE RIGHT THAT I LOSE TRACK OF TIME WHEN READING.

TOO SMART, IF YOU ASK ME!

PINCH

TWIST TWIST

STAHP ZAT ...!

OWWW!

START START

HMMM ...

UM... HERE'S YOUR BOOK...

BY KEEPING AN EYE ON THE SHADE, YOU CAN KNOW THE TIME AND HOW MUCH GOOD WEATHER IS LEFT WITHOUT EVEN TILTING YOUR HEAD.

CLEVER.

HMPH!

PRETTY SMART FOR A KID.

WE GOT EVERYTHING MOVED IN THE NICK OF TIME.

HUH. IT'S REALLY RAINING.

pit

pat

THANKS FOR PROTECTING MY BOOK.

I REALLY TREASURE THIS ONE.

IF YOU HADN'T PASSED BY, IT MIGHT BE ALL WET RIGHT NOW.

YUP! YOU SAVED *ALL* OF OUR STUFF!

THANKS!

VSSSHHH

*...he'd been thanked by anyone other than his sister.*

*...couldn't easily remember the last time...*

*The boy...*

IT'S...

IT'S NOTH-ING...

No big deal...

FOR ONCE, I ACTUALLY AGREE WITH PIPIRI.

P-PLEASE! AHA HAH! HELP M-

"FOR ONCE" ?!

NGHH ?!

YOU DID SOMETHING *GOOD!* SMILE! STICK OUT THAT CHEST!

TICKLE TICKLE コチョ

NGHH HAH HAH! STOP!

HMPH!

THIS IS A *ONCE*-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY, MIND YOU. I ALMOST NEVER DO PEOPLE FAVORS.

IS THAT... SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF?

LISTEN UP! IN THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, MISS PIPIRI HERE IS GONNA DO YOU A LITTLE FAVOR.

*THAT'S* WHAT YOU WANT ?

YOU KNOW, I WOULD'VE ANSWERED THAT FOR YOU EVEN IF I *DIDN'T* OWE YOU A FAVOR.

...AFTZAAK HAS A COPY OF EVERY BOOK ON THE WHOLE CONTINENT. IS IT REALLY TRUE?

I WANNA KNOW ABOUT THE CITY OF BOOKS.

I HEARD ONCE THAT...

SO, WHAT'LL IT BE?

SHOULDER MASSAGE ?

He's a kid! His shoulders don't get tense!

UH, HOW ABOUT ...

UM ...

IT *DOESN'T* ?!

*Not even close.*

SO... IF YOU WANNA GET TECHNICAL ABOUT WHETHER IT'S GOT A COPY OF EEEVERY BOOK, WELL, THEN... NO. IT DOESN'T.

WELL, I'LL BE!

BUT MY, MY! IN ALL MY YEARS! A YOUNG FELLER WHO'S INTERESTED IN THE CENTRAL LIBRARY!

WE HEAR ABOUT NEW TEXTS AND TRAVEL FAR AND WIDE, TO EVERY CORNER OF THE WORLD, AND BRING 'EM BACK TO THE LIBRARY.

ALL PART OF A DAY'S WORK FOR A KAFNA.

*Among other things.*

LET'S PUT IT LIKE THIS– WE'RE IN THE *PROCESS* OF COLLECTING EVERY BOOK.

*Yeah! Wow.*

IT'S NOT JUST BOUND WORKS WE'RE INTERESTED IN.

AND WE DON'T CALL 'EM "BOOKS." WE SAY "TEXTS."

YEAH. YOU KNOW, REAL OLD STUFF.

THERE ARE NEW BOOKS OUT THERE TO FIND?

HOW'S THAT DIFFERENT FROM A BOOK?

"TEXTS" ...?

'CAUSE PROFESSOR PIPIRI'S ABOUT TO START CLASS!

LISTEN UP, MY SHORT-STATURED INQUIRER.

HAH! VERY WELL!

*Do you just carry props with you wherever you go?*

きゅぴーん GLEAM

SHINE

THERE'S NO WAY THIS COUNTS AS A BOOK, RIGHT?

BUT LIKE A BOOK, IT'S STILL WRITTEN BY AN AUTHOR TRYING TO SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS WITH THE WORLD.

TABLETS LIKE THESE WERE HISTORY'S FIRST *TEXTS.*

A STONE TABLET!

A BUNCH OF LETTERS CARVED INTO THE FACE OF A ROCK, CONTAINING INFORMATION ABOUT THE PLACE WHERE IT STANDS.

WHAT'S THIS?

WHICH LED TO THE NEXT GREAT INVENTION IN WRITING!

...."WOULDN'T IT BE CONVENIENT IF WE COULD CARRY THIS STUFF AROUND"?

BUT SOON, EVERYONE WAS LIKE...

BUT THE FUN DOESN'T STOP THERE! THOSE ANCIENT PEOPLE STARTED LOOKING...

...FOR SOMETHING EVEN HANDIER! SOMETHING EASIER TO HOLD! SOMETHING THAT DIDN'T TAKE UP SO MUCH SPACE!

THEY WERE PRIMARILY USED FOR RECORDING NUMBERS. YOU KNOW, NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED OR WAGES PAID. STUFF LIKE THAT.

THE NEXT STEP IN THE EVOLUTION OF TEXTS!

*TABLETS MADE OF CLAY AND WOOD!*

SCROLLS WERE A REVOLUTION IN WRITING! AT FIRST, THEY WERE MADE WITH ANIMAL SKINS, STRETCHED THIN AND STITCHED TOGETHER.

SCROLLS!

AND IT WASN'T EASY TO UNFURL THEM AT A DESK.

...IT TOOK TWO HANDS TO HOLD 'EM...

IT WAS A REAL PAIN TO READ ANYTHING WRITTEN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SCROLL...

BUT SCROLLS STILL HAD SOME DISADVAN-TAGES.

THEY ROLL UP ALL COMPACT-LIKE, BUT THEY HOLD SO MANY WORDS!

IN FACT, THEIR CAPACITY IS WHAT FACILITATED THE BIRTH OF THE NOVEL.

AND NOVELS, IN TURN, ARE WHAT ALLOWED LIBRARIES TO REALLY TAKE OFF.

HE TOOK A SCROLL ON WHICH HE'D WRITTEN OUT SOME BATTLE PLANS AND FOLDED THE PAPER BACK AND FORTH SO HIS SOLDIERS COULD READ THROUGH IT MORE QUICKLY.

A CERTAIN GENERAL WHO DIDN'T CARE MUCH FOR SCROLLS TRIED OUT ANOTHER IDEA.

*WOW. I'D NEVER REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT IT BEFORE. THE DESIGN OF A BOOK ITSELF HAS ITS VERY OWN STORY...*

IN SHORT, THE DESIGN WE HOLD IN OUR HANDS TODAY REPRESENTS *LIFETIMES* OF EXPERIMENTA-TION!

THEY'RE TOUGH. THEY'RE EASY TO CARRY. YOU CAN WRITE A TON IN THEM. AND IT'S EASY TO FLICK THROUGH TO THE INFORMATION YOU NEED!

*THAT IDEA LED TO THE BIRTH OF THE MODERN BOOK!*

AND WORST OF ALL... WAR.

PESTS!

FIRES!

THIEVES!

SQUEAK

HOW-EVER!

NO MATTER WHAT SHAPE A TEXT TAKES, IT HAS NO SHORTAGE OF FOES TO CONTEND WITH!

WE ARE THE IRON BULWARK ON WHICH ALL WRITING CAN RELY!

WE SAFEGUARD THEM AGAINST ALL THREATS!

WE PRESERVE TEXTS IN ALL THEIR FORMS!

A LIBRARY'S JOB IS SO MUCH MORE THAN LENDING BOOKS!

...THE AFTZAAK CENTRAL LIBRARY!!

WE ARE...

TA-DAH!

CLAP CLAP CLAP

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

THANK YOU!

THANK YOU!

TSEK! TSEK!

BRAVO! BRAVO, PIPIRI!

HURRAH! HURRAH!

...ALL OF THAT WRITER'S HARD WORK WOULD BE LOST FOREVER.

IF THAT GIFT THEY LEFT TO US WERE TO SPLIT OR CRUMBLE ...

PEOPLE FROM ANCIENT TIMES SLAVED FOR COUNTLESS HOURS JUST TO FINISH A SINGLE STONE TABLET.

AND ONCE LOST, WE CAN NEVER EXPERIENCE THE THOUGHTS AND WORDS OF THOSE PEOPLE AGAIN.

PRO-TECT-ING...

... TEXTS ...

A CERTAIN MAGUS ONCE SHARED THESE WORDS ...

"TO PROTECT A TEXT..."

"...IS TO PROTECT THE WORLD ITSELF."

BUT I BET *YOU* THOUGHT WE GOT TO LOUNGE AROUND ALL DAY WITH A BOOK IN HAND.

JOLT

ERM!

*THAT'S* WHY THE CENTRAL LIBRARIANS COLLECT TEXTS.

EVEN IF IT MEANS BEING DRAGGED ALL THE WAY OUT TO SOME PODUNK TOWN LIKE THIS!

"TO PROTECT A TEXT..."

THOSE WERE THE WORDS WRITTEN IN YOUR BOOK...

JUST SO.

THEY'RE SOME OF THE OPENING LINES.

AS I SAID BEFORE, I REALLY TREASURE THIS BOOK.

BUT I WAS THINKING JUST NOW ABOUT WHY I LEFT IT BEHIND LIKE THAT.

NORMALLY, I DON'T TAKE IT OUTSIDE IN THE FIRST PLACE. I DON'T WANT TO LOSE IT.

BUT FOR SOME REASON, I FELT LIKE I OUGHT TO BRING IT WITH ME ON THIS EXCURSION.

WHEN WE GOT INTO TOWN, THE FIRST THING I DID WAS UNLOAD THE LUGGAGE FROM OUR MOUNTS. I FIGURED THEY MUST BE TIRED FROM THE LONG JOURNEY.

Well done, my friend.

BY CHANCE, WE'D STOPPED AT THAT PARTICULAR QUIET SPOT, WHERE THERE WEREN'T TOO MANY PASSERSBY.

AND AS I WAS UNLOADING THINGS, I HAPPENED TO SET MY BOOK DOWN...

...FORGET ABOUT IT, AND LEAVE IT UNATTENDED FOR ALL THAT TIME.

IT'S KINDA FUNNY, DON'T YOU THINK? THERE'S NO WAY I COULD EVER LEAVE THIS BOOK BEHIND. IT'S TOO SPECIAL TO ME.

YET, FOR SOME REASON ...

...ON THIS PARTICULAR DAY, IN THIS PARTICULAR PLACE, I DID.

...JUST MAYBE...

...THIS BOOK WANTED YOU TO READ IT.

MAYBE...

THAT'S RIGHT.

WHAT IF IT WAS *FATE* THAT LED YOU TO PICK IT UP TODAY?

WANTED... *ME...?*

...AND THAT'S ALL THIS REALLY IS.

YOU'RE RIGHT. I FORGOT MY BOOK ...

BUT CHALKING UP ALL THE EVENTS THAT UNFOLDED TO MERE FORGETFUL-NESS...

...IS SO UNINSPIR-ING.

OLD FORGETFUL HERE JUST FORGOT ABOUT IT!

AW, GIMME A BREAK!

"Old Forgetful"?

IGNORE THIS MOUTH! IT'S CON-STANTLY MAKING THINGS UP!

LIKE I WAS DESTINED TO-

THE THOUGHT THAT PERHAPS FATE BROUGHT US THIS MOMENT...

...MAKES IT SEEM THAT MUCH MORE SPECIAL. WOULDN'T YOU AGREE, MY YOUNG FRIEND?

HOW CAN YOU SAY SUCH WITH A STRAIGHT FACE!!

BLUSH

...!

IT WAS AS IF THE LETTERS DIS-SOLVED ...

...AND MIXED IN WITH MY VISION...

...SHOOTING THE SCENES THEY DESCRIBED STRAIGHT INTO MY EYES!

THAT BOOK WAS SOME-THING ELSE!

But bye!

FOR JUST A MOMENT...

...I WAS INSIDE THAT BOOK!

WHEN YOU OPEN THE DOOR, A VAST, NEW WORLD, GREETS YOU.

YOU START WITH A QUICK PEEK...

...AND HESITATE ABOUT WHETHER TO DIVE IN.

BECAUSE ONCE YOU DO, YOU KNOW IT WILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE YOU'RE ABLE TO COME BACK.

SOMETIMES YOU'VE GOT HOMEWORK WAITING. OR A ROOM TO CLEAN.

BUT THE TRULY SPECIAL TALES HAVE NO REGARD FOR THE READER'S INTENTIONS.

THEY REACH RIGHT OUT WITH SOME MYSTERIOUS FORCE...

EVERY NEW BOOK IS A PORTAL TO THE UNKNOWN.

...AND PUSH YOU TUMBLING THROUGH.


I WANT TO READ SO MUCH MORE!

# Magus of the Library


Keko

*The activities of the Central Library are split among 12 divisions known as "Offices." This expedition includes librarians from three.*

*PROTECTIONS OFFICE*

**SEDONA BLEU**

*Age 17*



*A promising new face in the Protections Office. Has a flair for the dramatic— so much so that it's kind of irritating.*

*LIAISONS OFFICE*

**ANZU KAVISHMAF**

*Age 33*



*The leader of the present expedition. A compassionate mother of six who always seems to be smiling. Is rumored to be absolutely terrifying when angry.*

*RESTORATIONS OFFICE*

**PIPIRI PILBERRY**

*Age 22*



*A kafna from the Kokopa race. Doesn't have the sharpest mind, but her skill in repairing books is unmatched.*

*RESTORATIONS OFFICE*

**NANAKO WATTLE**

*Age 17*



*A young lover of literature. Endlessly infatuated by books. Her only shortcoming is her standoffish personality.*

**PROTECTIONS OFFICE**

Exercises control over the movement and possession of illegal texts. Intervenes against attempts to steal valuable books.

**LIAISONS OFFICE**

Cooperates with local residents to establish new regional branches. Also conducts operations to acquire newly discovered books.

**RESTORATIONS OFFICE**

Concerned with the mending of lent books and ancient texts newly recovered.


TMP
ﾀﾞ
TMP
ﾀﾞ
3
What the Books Give Back

LOOK OUT... IT'S THE *LONG-EARS*...

UGH. ISN'T IT BAD LUCK OR SOMETHING IF THE LONG-EARS CROSSES YOUR PATH?

HE WAS LOOKIN' PRETTY SMUG. WHAT'S HE GOT TO BE HAPPY ABOUT IN LIFE?

*Beats me.*

THOUGHT MAYBE YOU'D GET HOME EARLY 'CAUSE OF THE RAIN.

TIFA?

YOU AT WORK AGAIN?

HEY! I'M HOME!

I CAN'T WAIT TO TELL HER ABOUT TODAY!

WHEN I BECAME AWARE ...

OF A KAFNA PAIR...

IT WAS A RAINY DAY...

TO HOME I MADE MY WAY ...

THAT'S RIGHT. THE BOOK.

...

I'D READ A WONDROUS BOOK...

NOT THAT I'M ALLOWED TO USE THE LIBRARY, ANYWAY.

I WONDER IF THERE'S A COPY AT THE LIBRARY.

I WANNA KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT...

I WOULDN'T LOSE ANY.

IF THEY ONLY GAVE ME A CHANCE, THEY'D SEE.

I'D RETURN EVERY BOOK I BORROWED WITH MY OWN TWO HANDS.

I WOULDN'T RUIN ANY.

PERK

HAAH...

TIFA ?!

CAN YOU HEAR ME ?!!!

HEY! WHAT'S WRONG ?! ARE YOU ILL ?!!

I...

I CAN'T DO IT.

ZZZZZZT

I-I GUESS FIRST LIFT HER INTO BED...!

WH- WHAT SHOULD I DO ...?

NGH!

*...understood just how powerless he really was.*

*At that moment ...*

*...the boy, more than ever before...*

I have to!

I gotta help her!

HA!

HA!

HA!

HA!

*...THERE ISN'T A SINGLE GROWN-UP IN THIS WHOLE TOWN WHO WOULD HELP ME!*

*...BUT...*

*I NEED A GROWN-UP WHO CAN HELP...*

*WE DON'T HAVE MONEY FOR A DOCTOR!*

BRRR!

BRUSH

BRUSH

SURELY THE MOST HANDSOME STEED IN THE WHOLE, WIDE WORLD!

OH, BIROU, YOU'RE SO ***HANDSOME,*** AREN'T YOU ?

AWWW. YOU EMBAR-RASSED ?

POKE POKE

WHOMP!!

YOU JUST LIKE BEING *DIFFICULT*, DON'T YOU?

UH! HEY, THERE! YOU OFF TO GO PLAY?

NUDGE NUDGE NUDGE

WHAT IS IT ?

SOME-THING'S NOT RIGHT?

NUDGE

BHFF!

HM?

THERE'S THAT BOY AGAIN.

OH...

BHFF! ILLILLOOO

AND THIS IS THOUSAND PURSE...

...AN HERB THAT'S BEEN IN USE FOR A VERY LONG TIME BY THE RAKTA PEOPLE. THEY CALL IT THE "SLEEPING PRINCESS."

THIS ONE'S A FIELD POPPY ...

...AN HERBACEOUS PLANT THAT PRODUCES A SPECIAL TOXIN TO DETER PREDATORS. IN LARGE DOSES, IT HAS A HALLUCINOGENIC EFFECT.

FIRST, WE HAVE SUMAF HENBANE ...

...OF THE FAMILY ***SOLANACEAE.*** IT'S A MEDICINAL HERB THAT AFFECTS THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM, INDUCING PARALYSIS.

THE MORE TOXIC THE PLANT, THE MORE POTENT A MEDICINE IT IS WHEN ADMINISTERED CORRECTLY.

CAREFULLY ADMINISTERED, PLANTS THAT NORMALLY PARALYZE THE BODY'S MUSCLES INSTEAD SIMPLY EASE PAIN AND AID REST.

TYPICALLY, ALL THREE ARE REGARDED AS POISONOUS. BUT IN SMALL DOSES, THEY HAVE QUITE USEFUL PROPERTIES.

WE'LL HAVE HER DRINK IT IN THREE DOSES. EVENING, MORNING, THEN NOON.

THIS IS A MEDICINAL TEA PASSED DOWN BY THE RAKTA.

WHEN HALF THE WATER HAS BOILED AWAY, REMOVE THE TONIC FROM HEAT AND STRAIN.

BE SURE TO USE EARTHEN-WARE. NOT CAST IRON.

NEXT, WE SPOON THE MIXTURE INTO A TEAPOT AND ADD WATER.

HEAT FOR ABOUT 30 MINUTES.

WE'LL ADD SOME RED ALGAE, SAGE, AND FLEAWORT ...

...CHOP IT FINELY, AND GENTLY MASH IN SOME GARLIC AND GINGER ROOT.

HERE. DRINK THIS.

WE HARDLY HAVE ANY MONEY, BUT...

...SHE WORKS FROM THE MOMENT SHE WAKES UP TO THE MOMENT SHE GOES TO BED, JUST SO I CAN GO TO SCHOOL...

SHE'S SO KIND TO ME ...

...AND SHE HIDES HOW HARD THINGS REALLY ARE FOR HER...

...

YEAH. THAT'S RIGHT.

YOU SAID SHE'S YOUR SISTER?

...

*The librarian ...*

*...asked no more about the boy's family.*

PFF.

THERE ARE NO SYMPTOMS OF FOOD POISONING, AND I DON'T THINK IT'S INFECTIOUS. SHE SHOWS NO SIGN OF INFLAMMATION.

BUT FROM YOUR WORDS, I SUSPECT SHE'S MALNOURISHED. SHE MUST HAVE COLLAPSED FROM FATIGUE.

WHAT THAT'S BOOK YOU HAVE ?

IT'S A BOOK THAT TURNS YOU INTO A DOCTOR ?!

NOT QUITE. IT'S MERELY A SOURCE OF KNOWL-EDGE.

BECOMING A DOCTOR REQUIRES *EXPERIENCE*, TOO.

IT DESCRIBES HOW TO IDENTIFY DISEASES BASED ON SYMPTOMS AND HOW TO CONCOCT VARIOUS REMEDIES.

THIS IS A MEDICAL REFER-ENCE.

IF EVERYONE IN THE VILLAGE MADE USE OF IT, IT COULD WELL SAVE MANY LIVES.

THIS IS A VERY VALUABLE BOOK, BUT IT'S AVAILABLE FOR LOAN AT THE LIBRARY.

THE MEDICINE WE MADE NOW WILL HELP HER TO REST AND RE-COVER.

BUT FOR IT TO WORK WELL, SHE'LL ALSO NEED NOURISHING FOOD.

HERE ARE FOUR SILVER PIECES.

USE THESE TO BUY HER SOMETHING NUTRI-TIOUS.

GLINT キラ…

GULP

NO. I CAN'T ACCEPT ANY MORE OF YOUR KINDNESS.

WHY NOT ?

I MEAN ...

YOU ALREADY GAVE US ...

...MEDICINE. BUT NOW MONEY ...?

I MEAN, I...

I CAN'T.

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT.

IT'S JUST ...

IT'S JUST TOO MUCH ...

THE MEDICINE IS ALREADY THANKS ENOUGH!

IT'S FINE! TAKE IT! YOU SAVED MY BOOK FROM THE RAIN TODAY, NOT TO MENTION BIROU AND THE OTHERS. THINK OF IT AS MY WAY OF SAYING THANKS!

WE'LL LET HER REST. HOW ABOUT WE GO SIT OVER THERE AND TALK?

...THERE'S A SYSTEM IN PLACE CALLED ALMS-GIVING.

YOU KNOW, IN COM-MUNITIES A BIT LARGER THAN THIS ...

IN SUCH COMMUNITIES, THOSE STRUGGLING FOR MONEY READILY ACCEPT THE ALMS.

...AND THE POOR HAVE A RIGHT TO RECEIVE THEM.

THE WEALTHY HAVE A RESPONSI-BILITY TO GIVE ALMS...

IT MIGHT NOT BE SO WRONG OF YOU TO TAKE THIS MONEY, OR EVEN CONSIDER IT YOUR *RIGHT* TO DO SO.

...IT'S TRUE THAT NOT EVERYONE BELIEVES ALMS TO BE A GOOD THING.

HOW-EVER ...

THAT PERSON BEGAN TO ACT PROUDLY, WHICH IN TURN *MADE* HIM PROUD.

SO, FOR EXAMPLE, A PERSON WHO BEHAVES PROUDLY MAY NOT HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SO FROM BIRTH.

THOSE WHO STAR AS THE HEROES OF STORIES EARNED THOSE ROLES BY ACTING LIKE HEROES.

THOSE WHO ARE BRAVE BECAME SO BY ACTING BRAVELY.

THERE IS A CERTAIN PHILOSO-PHER WHO WROTE...

...THAT IN PEOPLE, BEHAVIOR PRECEDES NATURE.

ULTIMATELY, NATURE FORMS OUR FATE.

...AND HABITS TO NATURE.

...ACTIONS TO HABITS...

...WORDS TO ACTIONS...

THOUGHTS LEAD TO WORDS...

BEHAVIOR BEGINS WITH THOUGHTS.

*The hero of a story hasn't been that way all along?*

BUT...

...I CAN SENSE THE PRIDE WITH WHICH YOU ARE TRYING TO CONDUCT YOURSELF.

...OR AT LEAST THAT'S ONE WAY OF THINKING.

I PERSONALLY DON'T THINK IT'S WRONG TO ACCEPT ALMS EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.

PERHAPS THERE ARE SOME WHO AT FIRST DECIDED TO TRY TAKING ALMS JUST ONCE OR TWICE.

BUT AS THEY CONTINUED TO BOW THEIR HEADS AND EXTEND THEIR HANDS IN HUMBLE RECEIPT...

...THEIR POSTURE, NATURE, AND EVEN FATE BEGAN TO SOLIDIFY INTO THOSE OF A BEGGAR.

I
*WANT* TO ACCEPT THEM... JUST TO HELP MY SISTER RECOVER!

B-BUT...!

I TAKE IT YOU DON'T NEED THOSE SILVER PIECES?

ERM!

I'LL CLEAN! I'LL GIVE YOUR HORSE A BATH!

I'LL DO ANY CHORE YOU SET ME TO!

PUT ME TO WORK!

PRETENDING YOU NEVER NEED HELP ISN'T AN EASY WAY TO LIVE.

REMEMBER, YOU CANNOT FILL AN EMPTY STOMACH ON MORALS ALONE.

...I IMAGINE YOU DO.

I WON'T ACCEPT WHAT I HAVEN'T EARNED!

NO!

LET US TALK A BIT ABOUT VALUE.

...

IT'S NOT A SUM EASILY EARNED BY A CHILD PERFORM-ING SIMPLE LABOR.

BUT I HOPE YOU REALIZE WHAT FOUR SILVER PIECES ARE WORTH.

...HM. VERY WELL. IF HANDOUTS AREN'T AN OPTION, PERHAPS TRADE IS.

THE REASON FOR THEIR HIGH PRICE WAS THE GREAT AMOUNT OF TIME THEY REPRESENTED. EVERY BOOK WAS WRITTEN OUT BY HAND.

LONG AGO, THE VALUE OF A BOOK WAS SAID TO EQUAL THAT OF A MOUNTAIN OF GOLD.

THINGS WHICH ARE COMMON BECOME CHEAP...

...WHILE THINGS HARD TO COME BY GROW IN VALUE.

WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLANT-BASED PAPERS AND PRINTING PRESSES WITH MOVABLE TYPE, BOOKS WERE SUDDENLY MUCH EASIER TO PRODUCE IN GREAT QUANTITIES, AND THEIR VALUE FELL SHARPLY.

WHAT'S MORE, BOOKS OF FINE QUALITY WERE WRITTEN UPON SHEETS OF ANIMAL SKIN, A MATERIAL BOTH DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN AND DIFFICULT TO PREPARE.

MONKS OF A CERTAIN SECT, FOR EXAMPLE, WERE SAID TO NEED A YEAR AND A HALF TO WRITE OUT ONE NEW COPY OF THEIR SACRED TEXTS.

SKILLS AND INFORMATION CAN HAVE VALUE, TOO, IF THEY ARE NOT COMMONLY KNOWN.

NOT TO MENTION, THE *MEDICINE* A DOCTOR HAS IS CRUCIAL, TOO.

PRE-CISELY!

DOCTORS POSSESS CERTAIN SKILLS NOT KNOWN BY OTHERS.

SO... IS THAT WHY IT COSTS SO MUCH TO SEE A DOCTOR? BECAUSE THERE AREN'T VERY MANY OF THEM?

WHAT DO *I* HAVE ...?

SO, TELL ME... WHAT RESOURCE DO *YOU* HAVE THAT CAN MATCH THOSE COINS' VALUE?

I'D LIKE TO HONOR YOUR SINCERITY. I'D LIKE TO FIND A WAY TO PAY YOU THOSE SILVER PIECES IN A FAIR TRANSACTION.

YOU HAVEN'T GRASPED THE LESSON YET.

I DON'T HAVE *ANY-THING* ...

NOTH-ING...

N...

YOU JUST HAVE TO FIND IT.

DO NOT TRIVIALIZE YOURSELF.

THERE IS SOMETHING ONLY *YOU* ARE CAPABLE OF.

*SKILLS AND INFORMATION CAN HAVE VALUE, TOO, IF THEY ARE NOT COMMONLY KNOWN.*

SOME-THING ONLY I CAN DO...

WAIT ...

...D-DOES THAT WORK ...?

...Huh?

I HAVE A *PLACE*!

THE PLACE WITH THE BEST VIEW IN THE WHOLE VILLAGE! NO ONE ELSE KNOWS ABOUT IT!

PERFECT!

I'LL TAKE THAT TRADE!

*And the following day, if recovery seemed nigh, he would take the kafna to see his secret spot.*

*The boy would stay home to care for his sister that night.*

*The boy and the kafna had an agreement.*

SUPPER IS READY.

AH, MY APOLO-GIES.

SEDONA! WE WERE BEGINNING TO WONDER WHERE YOU WERE!

Ahem!! Now, now!

CHOMP

WE WERE WORKING ALL DAY. HOW COME YOU GOT TO GO HAVE FUN?!

HEY! IT'S PO-LITE TO *WAIT!*

CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT ALL THESE RIDICULOUS DRAMATICS?

I'M AFRAID IT'S JUST THE NATURE OF THE ILLNESS.

OUR MEETING MAY NOT SEEM LIKE MUCH NOW, BUT THERE'S ALWAYS THE CHANCE THAT IT COULD GO ON TO CHANGE THE FATE OF THE WORLD.

EVERY ENCOUNTER IN LIFE IS SPECIAL.

*What are the odds of that?!*

MUNCH MUNCH

THE BOY WAS IN TROUBLE, SO I HELPED HIM OUT.

THE HALF-BLOOD?

WHO'S THIS NOW?

EARLIER TODAY, WE MET THE KID OF A PRETTY UNUSUAL UNION.

ALL RIGHT, EVERY-BODY! ENJOY!

IS THAT SO?

WELL, WE CERTAINLY HAD A TROUBLE-SOME DAY.

AND WHAT ABOUT...

MUNCH MUNCH モグ モグ

...THE GRIMOIRE? DID YOU FIND IT ?

*A certain man, on clearing a forebear's belongings from an old storehouse, had uncovered a box...*

*...containing a single tome tattered with age.*

*Ten days earlier ...*

*...an unusual letter had arrived at the Central Library.*

*...and he had written to ask whether the book was valuable, or whether it could be discarded without concern.*

*The book seemed to emanate a constant, faint light. The letter's author found it a bit eerie...*

*On receipt, the letter was first examined by the General Affairs Office. From there, it was sent to each of the relevant departments.*

A GRIMOIRE, YOU SAY?

IT'S MY DUTY AS A MEMBER OF THE LIAISONS OFFICE.

IF IT MEANS RECOVERING A BOOK, I'LL TRAVEL THE WORLD OVER.

MOST LIKELY. THE LOCATION IS QUITE REMOTE, BUT I WAS HOPING YOU'D BE WILLING TO LEAD THE INVESTIGATION.

CERTAINLY.

YES. IT MAY BE IN QUITE A STATE OF DISREPAIR.

...IT MUST BE LEAKING MANA.

BUT IF IT'S GLOWING FAINTLY ...

IN THAT CASE, I'D LIKE TO TAKE ALONG...

...TWO FROM THE RESTORATIONS OFFICE AND ONE FROM THE PROTECTIONS OFFICE.

ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING ?!

SO HERE WE ARE, ON AN EXPEDITION TO RECOVER A GRIMOIRE, BUT...

CHOMP

MUNCH

CHOMP

CHOMP

GRUNCH

CHOMP

MUNCH

BITE

IT SEEMS A THIEF SNUCK IN LATE LAST NIGHT...

*AUTHOR OF THE LETTER*

**DATEH ALBUREI**

*Three hours earlier ...*

IT WAS *STOLEN* ?!

EESH.

I'VE LEFT THE ROOM AS I FOUND IT.

RUB...
くしゃ...

HMM...

*I dunno exactly what type, but...*

I CAN FEEL SOME *REALLY* OLD MANA IN THE AIR.

WE'VE AT LEAST ASCERTAINED THE EXISTENCE OF THE TEXT.

HAD YOU MENTIONED THE BOOK TO ANYONE ELSE?

NO, NOT A SOUL.

WE TALKED TO SOME OF THE VILLAGERS. APPARENTLY THERE'S A SLUM JUST NORTH OF HERE.

THEY SAY THE VILLAGE SHOPS ARE ALWAYS DEALING WITH THIEVES FROM UP THERE.

I SEE.

SOUNDS LIKE WE'VE HIT A SNAG.

*Just then...*

*Home of Dateh Alburei*

BRRP!

HAAH...

I GUESS NOW...

...WE'RE ON THE HUNT FOR A *THIEF* AS WELL AS A *TEXT*.

スピー
PFF PFF
スピー

*What a pain...*

...MOST UNKIND TO THE LIBRAR-IANS...

I'VE DONE SOME-THING ...

"SIGH" ...

OH, WHAT A FIND!

THIS IS A GRIMOIRE!

HM, OSSEI ?

A "GRIMOIRE" ?

*Two days earlier ...*

WHAT, PRAY TELL, IS THAT ?

YOU CAN'T MAKE THESE ANYMORE. IT'S PROHIBITED UNDER THE LIBRARY CODE! WHICH MEANS THEY'RE BOTH VERY RARE AND *VERY* VALUABLE!

IT'S A BOOK CONTAINING THE POWERS OF THE MAGI! THEY WERE CREATED DURING THE GREAT WAR BETWEEN THE RACES.

THINGS LIKE THIS BELONG ON DISPLAY! IT'S A PRIZE COLLECTION PIECE! BIBLIOPHILES FAWN OVER THESE THINGS. OH, WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE...

OF COURSE I'M NOT GONNA USE IT!

BUT SURELY YOU CAN'T GO AROUND USING SOMETHING LIKE THAT ?

SO THAT GLOW IT HAS MEANS IT'S A SPECIAL BOOK, AFTER ALL.

TH-THAT MUCH?! FOR ONE RAGGED OLD BOOK?!

*How much would it be worth in good condition?!*

HUH ?!!

THE BOOK'S IN BAD REPAIR, SO THIS IS AS HIGH AS I CAN GO.

I CAN OFFER YOU THIS MUCH.

IF IT'S SO VALUABLE, ALL THE MORE REASON TO SEE IT TO THE CENTRAL LIBRARY.

*All you'd do with it is show it off, right?!*

AND BESIDES, I'VE ALREADY CONTACTED THE KAFNA.

DATEH! YOU *HAVE* TO SELL THIS TO ME!

COURSE, YOU'RE PRETTY STINGY ABOUT ANYTHING YOU *DON'T* DEEM VALUABLE.

I-I BELIEVE YOU... I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN YOU TO BE AN HONEST MERCHANT.

I DON'T TRY TO UNDERCUT ON THINGS I DEEM VALUABLE.

I WON'T RUN YOU AROUND, DATEH. IT'S A FAIR DEAL.

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS ...

THEN TELL THEM A THIEF BROKE INTO THE HOUSE! TELL THEM IT WAS STOLEN!

...I GUESS THEY'LL JUST HAVE TO GO BACK EMPTY-HANDED.

THE LIBRARIANS SEEMED TO BELIEVE THE STORY OF THE THIEF...

I'M AFRAID I LOST SIGHT OF EVERYTHING BUT THE MONEY.

A-ALL RIGHT ...

SO, HOW ABOUT IT? WE HAVE A DEAL?

WELL, THE STORY OF THE THIEF IS OBVIOUSLY A LIE.

HUH ?!

YES, MOST CERTAINLY.

*I'd reached the same conclusion.*

WHAT ?!

PFFT !!

WELL, YOU'RE... YOU KNOW ...

WE DIDN'T WANT YOU TO CAUSE A SCENE.

HEY! DON'T PATRONIZE ME! I *TRAINED* YOU!

I TOOK A PEEK IN SOME OTHER ROOMS. THEY WERE SPOTLESS. IT SEEMS WAY TOO DELIBERATE.

WHAT KIND OF THIEF LEAVES THAT BEHIND AND INSTEAD HAULS OFF A BUNCH OF HEAVY OLD BOOKS?

NOT TO MENTION, THE RUG HE HAD HANGING ON THE WALL WAS PURE *COTTON*. NOT WOOL!

WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME ANY OF THIS WHILE WE WERE THERE?!

HANG ON A SECOND ...!

TO ANYONE OTHER THAN A SEASONED COLLECTOR, A GRIMOIRE IS JUST A HALF-ROTTED OLD TOME.

AND THEY'RE HARD TO SELL OFF. DEFINITELY *NOT* THE FARE OF YOUR AVERAGE CAT BURGLAR.

HEAVENS. WHAT'LL WE DO ABOUT ALL THESE AMBITIOUS COLLECTORS WHO THINK IT'S ALL RIGHT TO CASUALLY PICK UP *GRIMOIRES?!*

*Don't they realize how dangerous they can be?*

MORE LIKELY, SOMEONE APPROACHED OUR CONTACT AFTER THE LETTER HAD BEEN SENT. SOMEONE INTERESTED IN ADDING THE BOOK TO THEIR PRIVATE COLLECTION.

BUT THAT SEEMS LIKE AN AWFUL LOT OF EFFORT TO GO TO FOR A TEXT SOMEONE STUMBLED ACROSS WAY OUT HERE.

I SUPPOSE IT'S POSSIBLE THERE'S SOMEONE OUT TO USE THE BOOK FOR ILL INTENT, AND THEY SIMPLY PRETENDED TO BREAK IN AS A COMMON THIEF.

THE LIAISONS OFFICE ISN'T AUTHORIZED TO GO AROUND CONFISCATING OTHERS' BELONGINGS.

IT'S IMPORTANT THAT HE GIVE IT TO US ***WILLINGLY.***

WE CAN'T *ASSAULT* HIM! AND CERTAINLY NOT JUST BECAUSE HE'S ACTING *FISHY...*

*SWIPE SWIPE*

WE SHOULDA SMACKED THAT GUY UP UNTIL HE SPILLED HIS GUTS!

SO WE'LL HAVE COME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE FOR NOTHING?!

THEN THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO.

IT'S HIS PROPERTY, AFTER ALL.

AND WHAT IF HE REFUSES ?!

SO WHAT DO WE DO NOW ?!

ASSUMING HE CONSPIRED TO PASS THE BOOK ON TO SOMEONE ELSE, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO FIND THE BUYER AND CONVINCE HIM TO GIVE IT UP.

IT'S NOT LIKE WE CAN OFFER TO BUY IT, EITHER.

YEAH, THE CENTRAL LIBRARY'S ALWAYS HURTING FOR CASH...

IT'S HER REPAIR WORK. IT'S SUPERB. AND SO QUICK! THAT'S WHY THEY LET THE SIMPLEMINDEDNESS SLIDE.

ACTUALLY, I'M IMPRESSED SHE PASSED THE TEST IN THE FIRST PLACE.

CAN'T BELIEVE SHE FINISHED HER TRAINING KNOWING SO LITTLE ABOUT THE CODE.

I CAN *HEAR* YOU, YOU KNOW!!

THAT'S ALL, HUH?

I CAN FEEL IT!!

WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?

IT'S THAT SHIFTY OLD CARE-TAKER !!

BLURT !!

OK, LISTEN UP!

I'LL GUESS WHO THE CULPRIT IS!!

Now, now...

OH, *NOW* WHO'S BASING THEIR CONCLUSION ON EMOTION?

HE'S ONE OF THOSE CRUMMY GUYS WHO OPENS A LIBRARY FOR THE ***STATUS!!***

It has to be him!!

APPARENTLY, HE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT BOOKS AT ALL!

I HEARD IT FROM THE LOCAL LIBRARIANS DURING THE LECTURE ...

RUMMAGE RUMMAGE RUMMAGE

BUT I'M INCLINED TO AGREE. I ALSO THINK IT'S THE CARETAKER.

'COURSE, I THINK HE'S THE CULPRIT, TOO.

...AND HAVE THE MEANS TO PURCHASE ONE.

HE'S ABOUT THE ONLY ONE HERE WHO WOULD UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF A GRIMOIRE...

IT SHOULDN'T MATTER IF HE'S MOTIVATED BY SOCIAL STANDING.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THAT HE'S ESTABLISHED A LIBRARY FOR THE VILLAGE.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THAT HE'S KEEPING THE LIBRARY RUNNING, NO MATTER HIS MOTIVATION.

BUT THANK YOU FOR THAT WONDERFUL REMINDER, SEDONA.

UNFORTUNATELY, I'M AFRAID HE'LL ALSO BE THE MOST DIFFICULT TO CONVINCE.

*I wonder if he'll give it up...*

I HAVE TO ADMIT I ALSO THINK HE'S OUR MOST LIKELY SUSPECT.

UM! PIPIRI ...?!

HAH!

YOU'RE A TERRIBLE JUDGE OF CHARACTER, SEDONA.

*Just shows how much of a kid you still are!*

ANZU SEEMS LIKE SHE MUST BE THE KINDEST AND GENTLEST OF MOTHERS.

THAT CARRIES A LOT OF WEIGHT, COMING FROM A MOTHER OF SIX.

AHAHAHAHA

YOU CAN ALWAYS RELY ON A MAN TO WORK HARD IF YOU MAKE IT A MATTER OF PRIDE.

WHEN SHE GETS ANGRY, SHE'S THE MOST TERRIFYING THING YOU'VE EVER SEEN!

WHEN I WAS STILL IN TRAINING, ANZU WAS MY TEACHER FOR THE LIAISONS CLASS.

SO YOU DON'T DENY THE SERPENT PART!

HEAVENS! STOP!

I HARDLY EVER GET ANGRY. IT HAS TO BE SOMETHING TRULY DESPICABLE.

I DON'T BUY IT.

I KNOW, 'CAUSE *I* WAS THE ONE SHE WAS SCOLDING!

IS THAT A BOAST?

IT WAS SO HORRIBLE, IT WAS LIKE YOU COULD SEE A HUGE ***SERPENT*** COILED UP BEHIND HER. EVERYBODY THOUGHT SO!

LOCATING IT MIGHT TAKE TIME, BUT WE MUST DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO RECOVER IT!

LET'S

Whoo!

^D EESH...

DO THIS!

CLAP

EVERY GRIMOIRE IS AN IMPORTANT TREASURE TO THIS WORLD.

P-PUTTING THAT ASIDE ...!

GOOFED OFF IN CLASS A BIT TOO MUCH...

WHAT'D YOU DO TO GET HER MAD ?!

I PROMISED TO SPEND THE AFTERNOON WITH THE BOY, SO COUNT ME OUT FOR NOW.

OH.

ｽﾝ SNIF... ｽﾝｽﾝｰ

WE STARTED AT THE CENTRAL LIBRARY TOGETHER. SEDONA RISES TO THE OCCA-SION WHEN IT REALLY COUNTS, I SWEAR.

JUST LEAVE IT BE...

I CAN SEE WHY YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS ABOUT THIS PLACE.

THIS IS QUITE THE WILD ANIMAL TRAIL!

COME ON, SEDONA! THIS WAY!

?

IT'S JUST BEYOND HERE!

RUSTLE

UP HERE, YOU CAN SEE EVERYTHING THAT'S GOING ON!

INCRED-IBLE!

SO THIS IS YOUR SPOT OVERLOOKING THE VILLAGE, HUH?

BY THE WAY, HOW'S YOUR SISTER DOING?

GOOD! SHE SAT UP IN BED TO DO SOME KNITTING TODAY.

YOU CERTAINLY CAN!

I'D SAY IT HAS THE BEST VIEW IN THE AREA, BAR NONE!

I BOUGHT SOME MEAT WITH THAT MONEY... SHE WAS REALLY EXCITED.

*THE MERCHANT WAS REALLY SUSPICIOUS OF ME, THOUGH...*

BUT, UM... WAS SHOWING YOU THIS SPOT REALLY ENOUGH TO PAY YOU BACK?

AND THEN SOME!

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF A TRAVELOGUE? IT'S A VERY POPULAR GENRE THESE DAYS.

PEOPLE SETTING OFF ON OUTDOOR ADVENTURES WITH A BOOK IN ONE HAND... IT'S A FASHION-ABLE NEW WAY TO SPEND TIME.

AND YOU KNOW WHAT? THE TRAVELERS EVEN *PAY* LOCALS TO SHOW THEM THE BEST SPOTS IN EACH AREA THEY VISIT.

WHAT YOU SOLD ME IS INFORMATION. AND WHAT I BOUGHT WAS AN EXPERIENCE.

THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT NOW. YOU EARNED THAT MONEY ALL BY YOURSELF. FAIR AND SQUARE!

I EARNED IT...

...ALL BY MY-SELF...

HEY! THERE'S MORE TO SEE IF WE KEEP CLIMBING!

フン! フン!... FIDGET FIDGET

SWISH

RUSTLE RUSTLE

FERRIONA... THE ONE-HORNED BEAST!!

RUST.LE.

I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE BEFORE IN REAL LIFE.

THIS ONE'S SMALL. IT MUST STILL BE A PUP.

THE BOY, MUST NOT REALIZE THAT HE'S BEEN INTRUDING UPON THE BEAST'S TERRITORY...

HOW AM I GOING TO HANDLE THIS ...?!

FERRIONA, A SACRED BEAST OF LEGEND. MEASURING 13 FEET LONG AND WEIGHING 775 POUNDS WHEN FULLY GROWN, ITS MASSIVE PHYSIQUE IS COVERED FROM HEAD TO TAIL IN BEAUTIFUL SILVER FUR. SURROUNDING ITS NECK IS A LUXURIOUS, FLOWING MANE, AND THE SINGLE HORN ON ITS HEAD-ITS NAMESAKE-IS SAID TO BE CAPABLE OF MIRACLES DEFYING ALL EXPLANATION.

THE BEASTS ARE ALSO KNOWN FOR THEIR FEROCIOUS TEMPERAMENT AND KEEN INTELLIGENCE. THEY NEVER CONGREGATE, INSTEAD LIVING A SOLITARY LIFE, EACH ANIMAL REIGNING OVER ITS OWN PERSONAL WOODLAND.

ゴゴゴ

ZZSHEE

HFF

ヒュオオ

WHOOOSH

WWSHH

!

Huh?

ヒュオオ

FWISH

IF YOU LUNGE, YOU FORCE MY HAND ...!

COME NO CLOSER, BEAST!

WHOOOSH

キキ

KUKUO'S HERE!

OH, HEY!

RUSTLE

I MUST PROTECT THIS BOY!

O-OH... N-NICE TO MAKE YOUR ACQUAIN-TANCE.

THIS IS MY GOOD FRIEND KUKUO!

WUFF

KUKUO, LOOK! A LIBRARIAN FROM THE CITY!

...

COME ON! DON'T BE SHY!

HAHA

HAHA

HAHAHA!

"BUT IT IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR EXPERI-ENCE."

...PHIL ASOPP.

BUT I CAN'T RIGHT NOW!

I WANNA PLAY, TOO!

"THE KNOWLEDGE WON THROUGH READING IS GREAT."

Hey! Haha!

POUNCE

OR PERHAPS IT'S SIMPLY THAT THIS BOY IS TRULY SPECIAL...

GUESS A REVISION TO THE ENCYCLO-PEDIA ENTRY IS IN ORDER.

BOOKS WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE THESE CREATURES REFUSE TO ASSOCIATE WITH HUMANS.

I'M GLAD YOU ENJOYED IT.

THANK YOU FOR THE WONDERFUL TIME.

WAIT HERE JUST ONE MOMENT.

?

THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA. I HATE TO BE SHOWN UP, YOU KNOW.

BEFORE WE PART ...

...ALLOW ME TO SHARE A LITTLE TRICK OF MINE!

FWIP

Your trick is a... carpet?

AH!

A A A

WH

O

AHAHAHAHA!

WHAT KIND OF CARPET IS THIS ?!

HOW ARE YOU DOING THIS ?!

WHAT'S HAPPEN-ING?!!

FWOO

TAKE NOTE, MY FRIEND !

THE WORLD IS OVERFLOWING WITH WONDERS YOU HAVEN'T EVEN BEGUN TO IMAGINE !!

AH!

AA

A

WHOOSH

THAT SHIFTY CARETAKER'S SUPPOSED TO BE GONE FOR THE DAY. WE SHOULD HAVE TURNED HIS LIBRARY INSIDE OUT!

GRUMBLE

GRUMBLE

HONESTLY, THOUGH ...

STILL NO LEADS.

UGH! THE LIAISONS OFFICE IS NOTHING BUT *RED TAPE!*

EVEN SO, WE CAN'T JUST BARGE IN. A SEARCH WOULD REQUIRE A WARRANT.

I *KNOW* HE DID IT! I FELT THE SAME MANA THERE AS IN THE ROOM THE BOOK WAS STOLEN FROM!

SO WE CAN'T VERY WELL GO AROUND BREAKING THE LAWS OURSELVES!

IN ASKING OTHERS TO RUN LIBRARIES FOR US, WHAT'S IMPORTANT ABOVE ALL ELSE IS THAT THEY FOLLOW THE LIBRARY CODE.

STILL, I'M A LITTLE CONCERNED ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE GRIMOIRE.

YOU GO AHEAD AND DO THAT BY YOUR-SELF.

GOOD! IF WE'RE GONNA BE HERE A WHILE, WE CAN MEND THE LIBRARY'S ENTIRE COLLECTION!

I DOUBT THAT ...

IF WE TAKE THE TIME TO EXPLAIN TO HIM THE DANGERS OF THE GRIMOIRE, I'M SURE HE'LL TURN IT RIGHT OVER.

*Yeah, yeah.*

OVER IN RESTORATIONS, YOU'RE MORE ARTISANS THAN DIPLOMATS.

AND WE ALL KNOW THE RISKS POSED BY A DAMAGED GRIMOIRE.

IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL THE SPELL INSIDE RUNS AMOK.

AND IF IT WAS SUDDENLY PULLED OUT OF STORAGE, DOUBTLESS THE PAPER IS OXIDIZING EVEN FASTER THAN BEFORE. IT COULD BE GETTING WORSE BY THE HOUR.

EVEN INSIDE THAT BOX, I'M SURE IT'S BEEN EXPOSED FOR SOME TIME NOW TO ALL MANNER OF MOISTURE, MOLD, AND PESTS.

HEY, NANAKO, WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, COULD YOU SHARPEN MY KNIFE UP?

SHARPEN IT YOURSELF!

UNDERSTOOD.

ASSEMBLE YOUR TOOLS. BE PREPARED TO PERFORM ANY TYPE OF REPAIR AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE.

WELL, WE CAN AT LEAST READY OURSELVES TO ACT QUICKLY ONCE WE MANAGE TO GAIN ACCESS.

HM?

OH, SURE. RIGHT.

SEDONA'S CONDUCTING VALUABLE SURVEY WORK RIGHT NOW.

THINK OF IT THIS WAY...IT'S IMPORTANT TO GET TO KNOW THE VILLAGERS AND FIND OUT WHETHER THEY'RE MAKING USE OF THE LIBRARY.

tsk!

SPEAKING OF WHICH, WHILE WE'RE ALL TOILING AWAY, SEDONA'S OFF FOOLING AROUND!

AHHHH!

WHOOOOSH

AW, FOR THE LOVE OF–

Oh dear ..

...AND THE THINGS WE FEEL RIGHT NOW?

THIS VIEW ...

...THERE'S ONE THING I KNOW FOR SURE.

WOW ...

ALL THIS TIME, I FELT LIKE THAT CLEARING BY THE GREAT TREE WAS THE HIGHEST SPOT IN THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD!

I-I GUESS ...

HAD A CHANCE TO CALM DOWN?

THEY'RE BUT A DROP IN THE VAST OCEAN OF POSSIBILITIES OFFERED BY OUR WORLD!

GOOD. NOW TAKE A LOOK AROUND.

GLAD TO HEAR IT.

HEH HEH.

<3 ROLL ROLL <3

PHEW...

THAT WAS PRETTY SCARY, BUT IT WAS A LOT OF FUN, TOO!

YOU LOOK SO COOL... YOU'VE GOT MYSTERIOUS POWERS...

EVERY-THING ABOUT YOU IS AMAZING, SEDONA!

ADMIRE

GLOW

YOU'RE LIKE...

...A HERO STRAIGHT OUT OF A BOOK!!

I WISH THE OTHERS IN MY PARTY COULD HEAR YOU SAY THAT.

So immature.

Such a dork.

Still has some growing up to do.

IT SOUNDS SO GREAT! I CAN'T WAIT UNTIL I GET TO VISIT AFTZAAK AND READ AS MANY BOOKS AS I WANT!

MORE THAN YOU COULD DREAM OF!

AND BEST OF ALL, IT'S THE FIRST PLACE ON THE CONTINENT TO GET COPIES OF THE NEWEST VOLUMES!!

SO YOU LIKE READING NOVELS, TOO, HUH?

YEAH! DOES AFTZAAK HAVE LOTS OF NOVELS TO READ, TOO?!

Oh...

YOU COULD READ EVERY BOOK ON ITS SHELVES TWICE OVER BEFORE NEEDING TO JOURNEY TO THE CITY!

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY ALREADY OFFERS MANY OF THE BEST!

WELL, YOU NEEDN'T BE IN TOO MUCH OF A RUSH.

It's no big deal...

NO...

IT'S JUST ...

BUT...

HM?

...
ACTUALLY, I'M...

...NOT ALLOWED TO USE THE VILLAGE LIBRARY.

YOU SAW WHAT MY HOME IS LIKE.

THEY CALL THAT PART OF TOWN THE "SLUMS."

THE LIBRARY'S OFF LIMITS TO PEOPLE FROM THE SLUMS.

...
WHAT ?

THERE ARE DEFINITELY SOME WHO WOULD MISTREAT THE BOOKS OR EVEN STEAL AND TRY TO SELL THEM.

I MEAN, I DON'T HOLD IT AGAINST THE CARETAKER. I UNDERSTAND WHY HE HAS TO HAVE THAT RULE.

I JUST... REALLY WANT TO READ MORE.

...WHO I REALLY WAS, YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO TALK TO ME.

BUT... I FIGURED IF YOU KNEW...

I DIDN'T MEAN TO LIE TO YOU.

IF I MADE IT TO AFTZAAK, DO YOU THINK THEY'D LET ME BORROW BOOKS THERE?!

I KNOW I'M POOR AND THAT I LOOK FUNNY.

BUT MAYBE IF I GO TO AFTZAAK ...!

CLASP!

DON'T SWEAT IT! THE KAFNA LET EVERY-ONE CHECK OUT BOOKS. NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE!

GEE, YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT A LITTLE THING LIKE THAT?

OH...

HAH ...!

THAT REMINDS ME! WAIT RIGHT HERE.

FOR REAL!

FOR REAL?!

HERE. I WANT YOU TO BORROW THIS.

WAIT ...

WHAT ?!!

You'll really let me?!

WE'LL BE STAYING IN THE VILLAGE FOR A WHILE YET.

HUH ?!!

BUT, UM...

NOD NOD NOD NOD

DIDN'T YOU SAY THIS BOOK IS SPECIAL TO YOU?

BUT, YOU HAVE TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT. AND READ IT, TOO!

THAT'S A PROMISE YOU MAKE TO BOTH THE BOOK AND ITS OWNER!

WHEN YOU TOLD ME ABOUT...

...HOW YOU WANTED TO READ MORE, IT FELT LIKE MY HEART WAS ABOUT TO BURST WITH JOY.

THIS BOOK TELLS THE STORY OF A LIBRARY, AND A GREAT MAGUS WHO FOUGHT ON BEHALF OF THE WORLD.

IT'S WHAT MADE ME WANT TO TRY TO BECOME A KAFNA.

THE REASON YOU DECIDED TO BECOME A KAFNA?

THAT'S RIGHT.

IT SET ME ON THE PATH I'M ON TODAY.

YOU KNOW, BOOKS HAVE THE ABILITY ...

...TO COMPLETELY CHANGE YOUR LIFE. TO CHANGE *ANYONE'S* LIFE.

IT'S AN INCREDIBLE POWER.

EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO BE TOUCHED BY THAT POWER.

AND WE KAFNA HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE THE CHANCE IS AVAILABLE TO ALL.

YOU'RE GOING TO SHOCK THE POOR VILLAGERS OUT OF THEIR MINDS!

SEDONA, WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME WERE YOU THINKING ?!

HAA!

HAA

SEDONA ...?

...IN MY VERY OWN HOME !!

HA!

HA!

I FINALLY GET TO READ A BOOK...

SNATCH

CLAMP

HUH ?!

SHOVE

YOU'VE REALLY DONE IT NOW!

YOU LITTLE *RAT!*

NO! I *BOR-ROWED* THAT BOOK FROM—

LUNGE

WHAT ?!

IT WASN'T ENOUGH TO SNEAK INTO THE LIBRARY, HM?! YOU HAD TO *STEAL A BOOK,* DID YOU?!

AHH!

STOMP

*WHO WOULD EVER LEND A BOOK TO YOU ?!*

THIS IS WHY YOU TRASH FROM THE SLUMS CAN'T BE TRUSTED !!

...YOU LITTLE *THIEF!*

DESPICABLE! I'D BETTER NOT SEE YOU NEAR THE LIBRARY AGAIN...

...
ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?

WHY DOES THIS ...

WHY ...?

I TRY MY BEST ...

...TO LIVE A GOOD ...

...HONEST LIFE, BUT...

HE WOULD NEVER DO THAT !!

NO! YOU'RE WRONG!

DON'T TELL ME *YOU'RE* HOW HE ALWAYS FINDS A WAY INTO THE LIBRARY ?!

SO WHAT IF I AM?!

SHREK

WHAT HAPPENED TO MY OBEDIENT LITTLE DAUGH-TER...?

BECAUSE I'VE WATCHED HIM! THE WAY HE'S SO KIND TO BOOKS!

YOU'VE *WATCHED* HIM READ ?

OH, PLEASE!

AND HOW WOULD YOU KNOW ?!

WHY WON'T YOU LET HIM USE THE LIBRARY ?!

IS IT JUST BECAUSE HE LOOKS DIFFERENT ?!

I KNOW HE'S POOR, BUT HE CAN *READ* ...

...AND HE *LOVES* BOOKS!

WHY SHOULD I?!

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE FROM THE LONG-EARED BOY.

LISTEN TO ME, SAKIYA.

IN MY DAYS AS A MERCHANT, I'VE SEEN MY FAIR SHARE OF DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE RACES.

DIFFERENT BLOOD BEGETS DIFFERENT THOUGHTS AND DIFFERENT VALUES. IT'S THE WAY THINGS ARE.

...COMES FROM ANOTHER RACE, AND THE TWO DESPISE ONE ANOTHER.

HALF HIS BLOOD HE SHARES WITH US. BUT THE OTHER HALF...

BUT TRUST ME, THEY WILL. AND WHEN THEY DO, THEY'RE GOING TO MAKE YOU *VERY* SAD. THAT'S WHY YOU MUST PUT HIM OUT OF YOUR LIFE ***NOW*** RATHER THAN LATER!

YOU TWO ARE STILL CHILDREN, SO THOSE DIFFERENCES HAVEN'T YET GROWN CLEAR.

...HIS EARS ARE DIFFERENT, OR HIS SKIN...

IT DOESN'T MATTER IF...

I'M SURE OF IT!

YOU'RE WRONG!

IF WE CAN READ THE SAME BOOK...

...AND SMILE THE SAME WAY...

...AT THE SAME PARTS...

...THEN WHAT'S INSIDE OF US IS THE SAME!!

YOU'RE JUST...

CRACKLE

...A BIG, OLD MEANIE-HEAD !!

DASH

PAT PAT

SLUMP

Take off in my own direction

CLATTER

CRUNK

I don't believe it...

THIS BEHAVIOR IS *UN-ACCEPT-ABLE.*

...BUT IT SEEMS THIS TIME OUR INSPECTION WAS TOO LAX.

IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US TO OPERATE FROM A MINDSET OF TRUST ...

THANK YOU, SEDONA, FOR BRINGING THIS TO LIGHT.

IT IS AN OFFENCE MOST GRAVE, THAT NO CIRCUMSTANCE CAN EVER WARRANT.

WE CANNOT ALLOW THIS TO GO OVER-LOOKED.

*HELP, I'M STAYING OUT OF THIS ONE.*

*SO, IT'S REALLY TRUE.*

*EEP. THERE'S THE SNAKE.*

I REALLY BELIEVED...

NO.
I WOULDN'T EVEN MAKE IT INTO A DRAWING.

"THE TOWN WAS ALIVE WITH A GREAT, BUSTLING CROWD."

I'D BE PART OF THAT CROWD.
ONE MEANINGLESS SPECK IN A GROUP MENTIONED IN PASSING.

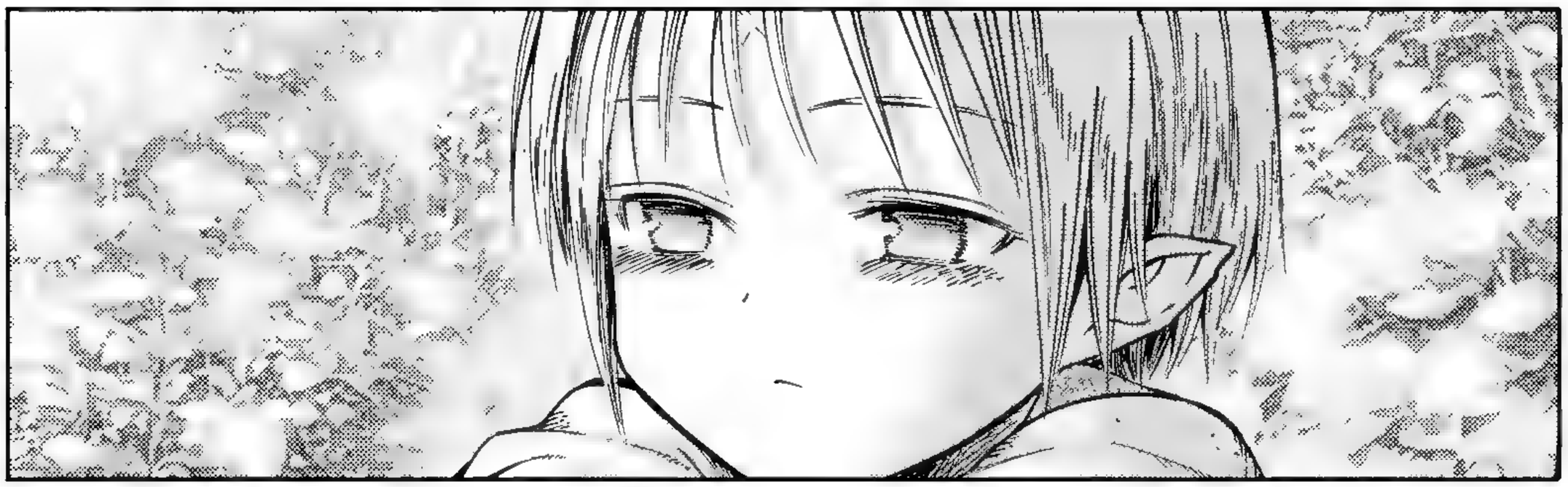
BUT NOW I CAN SEE THAT IN A STORYBOOK WORLD...

...I'D BE NOTHING MORE THAN A FACE DRAWN IN THE BACKGROUND.

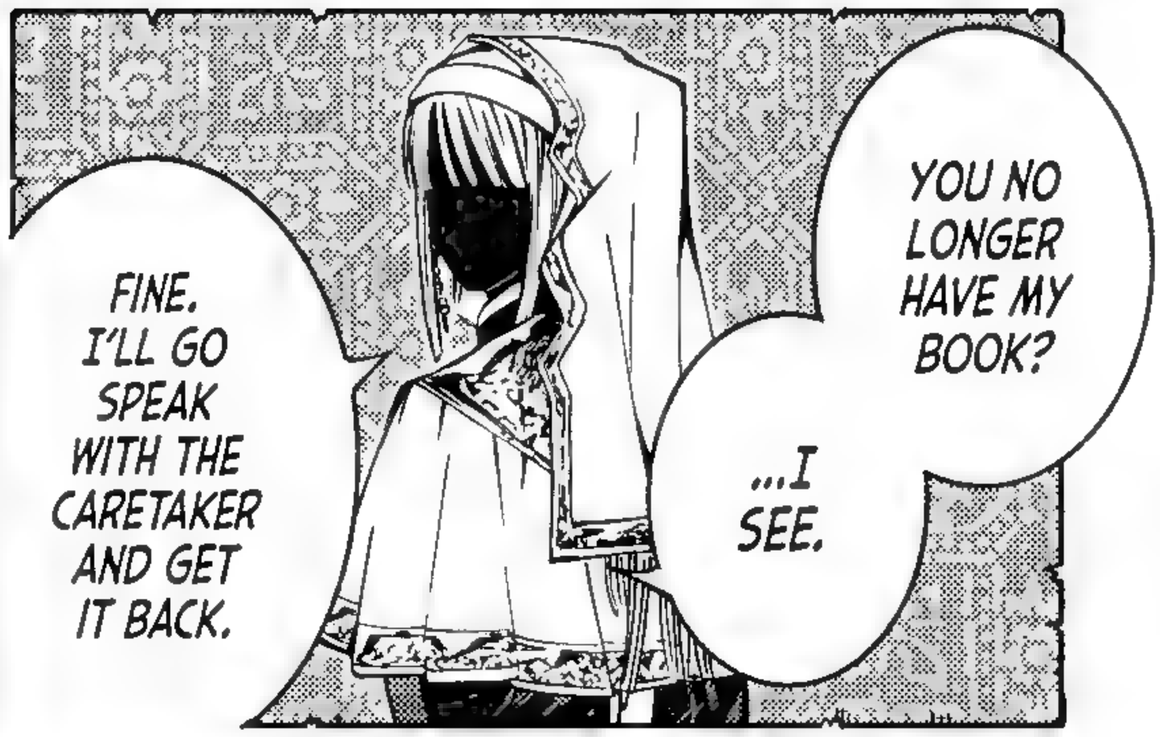
...THAT SOMEDAY A HERO WOULD APPEAR TO WHISK ME AWAY.

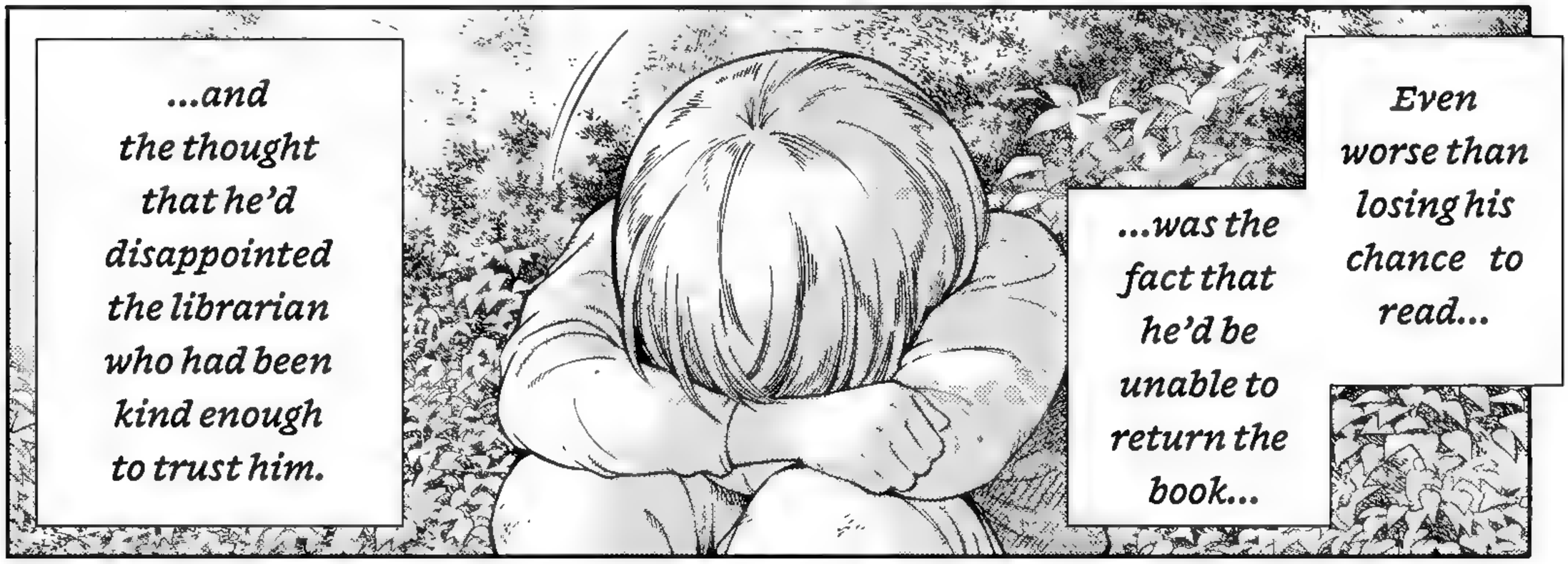
THAT I'D GET TO BE PART OF THE ADVENTURE.

THAT'S HOW UNIMPORTANT I'D BE...

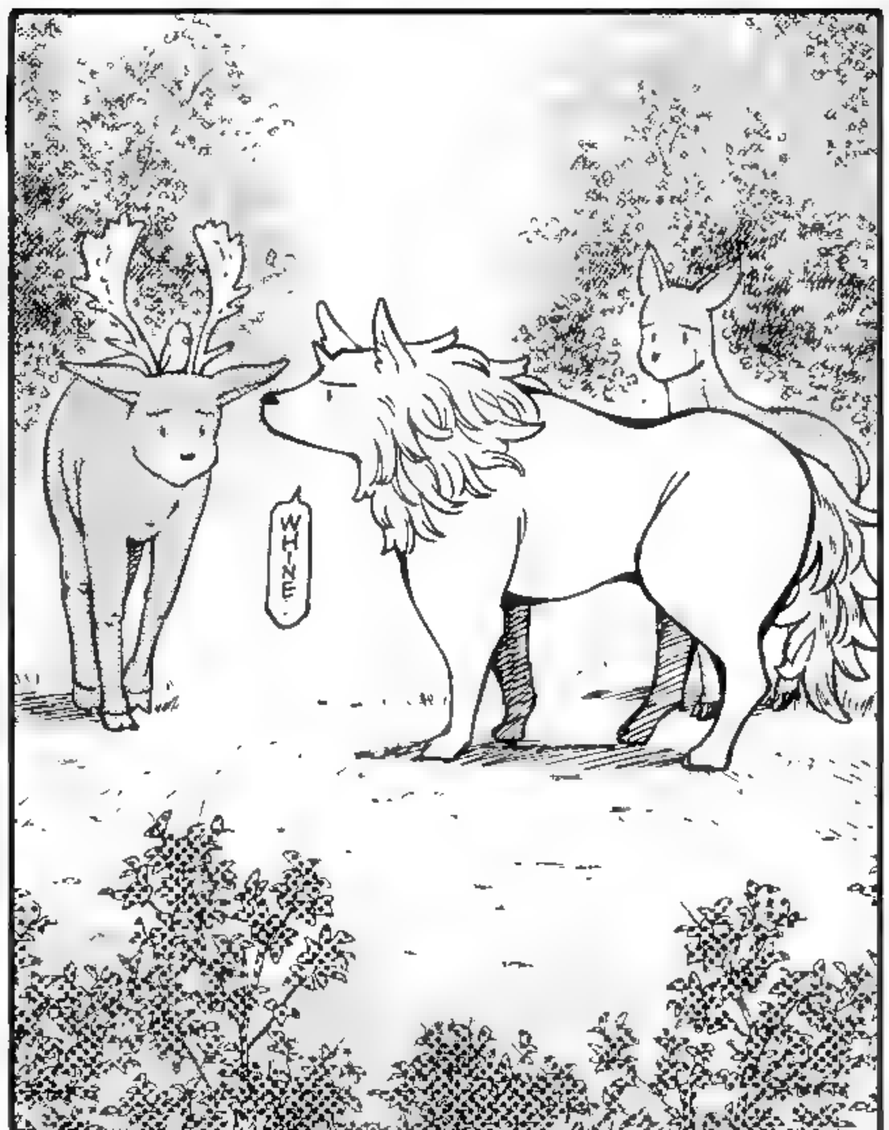



HMPH. YOU MUST HAVE QUITE A REPUTATION AROUND HERE, FOR A SINGLE BOOK TO BE PLUCKED RIGHT FROM YOUR HANDS.


YOU NO LONGER HAVE MY BOOK?
...I SEE.
FINE. I'LL GO SPEAK WITH THE CARETAKER AND GET IT BACK.


...and the thought that he'd disappointed the librarian who had been kind enough to trust him.
...was the fact that he'd be unable to return the book...
Even worse than losing his chance to read...


PAD
PAD


ミャー



GO AWAY!

NUDGE NUDGE スリ スリ

BUT... WEREN'T YOU SAVING THIS FOR YOUR DESSERT?

...

WINCE..

POKE POKE

WHAT DO YOU WANT?!

sniff

I'M SORRY I TOLD YOU TO GO AWAY...

...THANKS, KUKUO.

WAFT...

BWUF!

NO-BODY'S RUNNING OR CALLING FOR HELP.

HASN'T ANYBODY NOTICED IT YET?!

OH, NO ...

WHAT IF THERE'S A FIRE ?!

WHAT *IS* THAT ?

IT'S COMING FROM THE LIBRARY ...

IT LOOKS LIKE... SMOKE.

?!

FLOSHOVE

WHAT IF THE BOOK'S INSIDE THERE ?!

GASP

WHIRL

YOU WANT ME TO RIDE ON YOUR BACK ?!

YOU THINK I SHOULD GO?!

...!!

BWUEH

UP GROUCH T-

...WHAT COULD I DO TO HELP?

BUT...

*A PERSON WHO BEHAVES PROUDLY MAY NOT HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SO FROM BIRTH.*

*THAT PERSON BEGAN TO ACT PROUDLY, WHICH IN TURN **MADE** HIM PROUD.*

...STRONG ENOUGH TO...

*I REALLY TREASURE THIS ONE.*

I'M NOT ...

***TO BECOME BRAVE, YOU MUST FIRST BEHAVE AS SUCH.***

***TO BECOME A HERO, YOU MUST FIRST ACT AS ONE.***

*...ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS IN LIFE–*

*IT'S GOT TO BE...*

SCARF

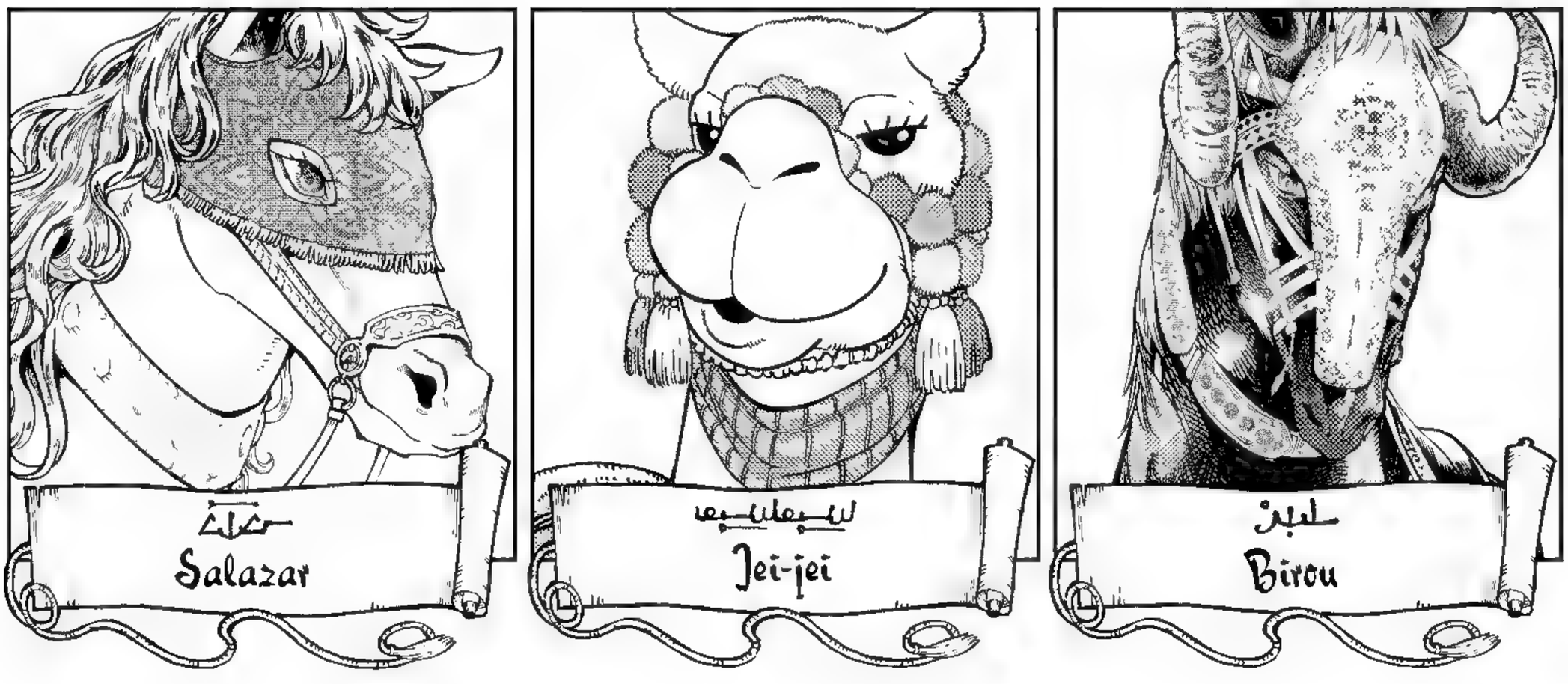
SCARF

SCARF

SPLIT

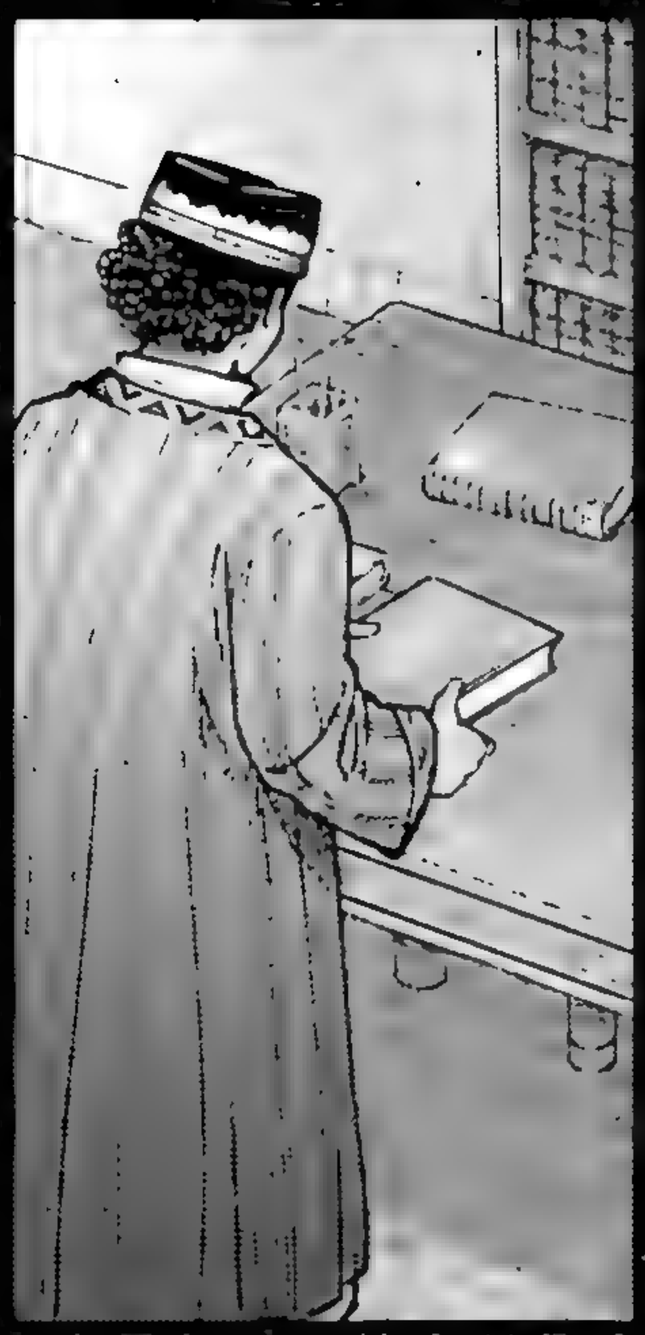

WHEN SOMEONE LETS YOU BORROW SOMETHING, YOU MAKE SURE TO GIVE IT BACK!

# Magus of the Library


سالازار
Salazar
جي-جي
Jei-jei
بيرو
Birou

THERE'S NO SHELVING NUMBER!

WHAT ?!



*THEN WHAT'S INSIDE OF US IS THE SAME!*



WHAT IS GOING ON?! THERE'S NO RESIDUE. IT'S NOT LIKE THE LABEL WAS PRIED OFF...

DON'T TELL ME HE REALLY DID BORROW IT FROM SOMEONE ELSE?!



HMPH. I SUPPOSE NOW I HAVE NO CHOICE.

*Crackle*



IT'S THAT *PIRATE* STORY AND ITS RIDICULOUS IDEALS ...



THE WORLD ISN'T SOME BEAUTIFUL, HARMONIOUS PARADISE.

...IF ONLY YOU KNEW WHAT IT'S LIKE OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE.

IGNO-RANT LITTLE FOOLS ...

SIZZLE

SIZZLE

I'LL LET THE LITTLE RUNT INTO THE LIBRARY TO MAKE IT UP TO HIM. HE CAN CHECK OUT A BOOK.

SIZZLE

SIZZLE

# 4 Dawn of a New Romance

THE LIBRARY *IS* ON FIRE !!

ROOOOOOAR

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, KEKO ?!

SCREECH

!

WHAT IN THE WORLD HAPP—

IS DADDY STILL INSIDE ?!

I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE SAFE! WHAT ABOUT THE CARETAKER ?!

I DON'T KNOW! KEKO BROUGHT ME HERE, AND...

I KNOW THE LAST TIME I SAW HIM HE WAS IN THERE, BUT...!

YOU THINK HE MIGHT STILL BE INSIDE?!

SAKIYA !

SAKIYA, WE HAVE TO GO SAVE HIM! WHICH PART IS HE IN?!

Huh ?!

IF HE'S IN THERE... HE'D PROBABLY BE IN HIS STUDY!

THE BOOK MUST BE IN THERE, TOO!

murmur murmur

What's going on?!

THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOME KIND OF ACCIDENT...

What's that smoke ?!

murmur murmur

FWIP

WAIT ...

BWUFF

GET ON! I NEED YOU TO GUIDE ME!

G-Get on him ...?!

I READ THAT IN A FIRE, THE SMOKE'S MORE DANGEROUS THAN THE FLAMES THEMSELVES!

It was in Shagrazzat!

WHAT'S *THIS* FOR ?!

ROOOOOAR

SCREECH

WHAT ARE YOU KIDS THINKING ?!

STOP! THE MEN ARE ON THEIR WAY! THEY'LL HANDLE THIS!!

PLUME
PLUME
PLUME
PLUME
SZZZZZZZ
YOU HEARD HER, KUKUO!
IT'S IN THE BACK! THAT WAY!
LUNGE
DADDY!
CARE-TAKER!
TMP
ROOOAR

CARE-TAKER MENES!

I NEED TO KNOW WHERE THE BOOK IS! THE ONE I WAS CARRYING!

READY... AND... PULL!

HOLD HIS OTHER ARM!

TUG TUG

COUGH COUGH

IT'S ...

IT'S ON THE DESK ...

DASH

NO! WHAT'RE YOU-

WHAT ?!

KUKUO! GET THEM OUT OF HERE!

I'M GONNA GET THE BOOK!

NOD

WAIT! DON'T LEAVE HIM!

COUGH

HFF.

SIZZZZZLE

KRNCH

?!

KRBAM!

JOL

... WHAT ABOUT ...

... THESE BOOKS ...?

RUMMAGE

FOUND IT!

BUT...

SPARK

NO ...!

THE ENTRY-WAY'S ...!

BOOM

WHAT ...?


RoOOoOOOOAR
...IS THAT ?!
WHAT ...

CARE-TAKER!

SAKIYA!

COUGH

COUGH

THIS IT

MY FRIEND IS STILL IN THERE!

HE'S STILL INSIDE!

CLIP

LEAP

CA-CLOP

COUGH

COUGH

COUGH...

SLUMP

HFF...

HFF...

CLUTCH

I'LL PROTECT YOU.

DON'T WORRY...

...A SINGLE BOOK I BORROW!

I'LL ALWAYS RETURN THEM. JUST THE WAY I...

.. GOT ..

I'LL NEVER STEAL ...

...I'LL NEVER RUIN...

THEM

FNUMP

...PLEASE LET SEDONA FIND YOU...

...EVEN IF MY BODY'S CHARRED BLACK...

...SO PLEASE...

I'LL PROTECT YOU...

IT ONLY MAKES YOU A RECKLESS FOOL.

FAILING TO KNOW YOUR STRENGTH AND TAKING ON MORE THAN YOU CAN HANDLE DOES NOT MAKE YOU BRAVE.

DON'T CONFUSE BRAVERY WITH IMPRU-DENCE.

SEDO... NA...

...IS SOMETHING A HERO MUST SOMETIMES DO.

KRNCH

...EVEN WHEN IT MAY SEEM FOOLISH...

BUT RISING UP TO FIGHT ...

ALL RIGHT! LET'S TAKE A LOOK!

OF ALL THE GRIMOIRES IN THE WORLD, IT HAD TO BE ONE WITH A FIRE SPIRIT.

KOMMM

GLEAM

RESTORATIONS OFFICE, HEADING IN!!

ON YOUR TOES, NANAKO! LET'S DO THIS!!

I'M READY.

THUD

DAMAGE SCALE-LEVEL FIVE! PROCEDURE 387! WE'VE GOT BRISTLETAIL DAMAGE! TWO SHEETS! AND THE COVER CAN'T BE REPLACED! LET'S START BY PATCHING UP THE PEST DAMAGE THAT'S CAUSING THE MANA LEAKS!

FWIP

LOOKS LIKE HE HASN'T SUFFERED ANY BURNS. I'LL WATCH FOR ANY SIGNS OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING FROM THE SMOKE.

KEEP AN EYE ON HIM FOR ME, PLEASE.

FWISH

CRACKLE

ALL RIGHT, THEN ...

...NOW YOU GET TO DEAL WITH *ME.*

I'M REMOV-ING THE COVER!

SHK SHK

SEDONA, A LITTLE HELP?

SNAP

PRY

VOOOM

ZHP

JOLT

CRACK

CRACK

?!

FWOOSH

FWIP

RIIIIIP

There was an energy...

They referred to the act of conversing with and channeling that energy as kalachpwa—spellcasting.

...found in all things—organisms, nature, even words themselves. Among the magi, it was known as "mana."

...a magus able to work with the mana in the air, thereby controlling the wind itself.

Sedona was a machni hwa kalachpwa ...

*Sedona had learned to control wind by using mana to shift air from one place to another.*

*Wind is born when the air rushes from places where it is concentrated to places it is sparse.*

FWOOSH!

WHUSH

WHIRR

WHUMP

SWISH

FWIP

GRAK!

STRUGGLE

STRUGGLE

BUT DON'T WORRY. MY COMPANIONS WILL HAVE IT FIXED UP SOON ENOUGH.

I KNOW YOU MUST BE FRUSTRATED BY THE STATE OF YOUR HOME.

SORRY FOR THE ROUGH TREATMENT.

*But a fire's weakness was its inability to continue burning when the oxygen that normally made up a mere 20 percent of the air was removed.*

*Fire consumed a library's books. Its smoke choked the people inside.*

*The threat of fire hung over every library ever built.*

NOW WE JUST HAVE TO SEE TO THESE FLAMES.

*One could be easily extinguished by pulling away the oxygen surrounding it.*

SSHHEEWWW.

THE SMOKE WILL BE GONE IN TIME. I'VE BROUGHT ALL THE ASH IN THE AIR DOWN TO THE FLOOR, AND I'LL KEEP THE HUMIDITY AND TEMPERATURE OF THE ROOM AT AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL.

THE REST IS UP TO YOU TWO.

BILLOW BILLOW

NICE WORK!

I SEE NOW WHY THEY SAY NOBODY STANDS A CHANCE AGAINST THE WINDS OF THE PROTECTIONS OFFICE.

## The Art of Grimoire Restoration

*As with any old book, the restoration process began with tissue paper affixed over the holes on every page.*

*Damage from pests was addressed with a special type of tissue, treated with a tincture made from 12 different herbs.*

*If not stored properly, books tended to meet with damage wrought by pests.*

*Such damage was particularly hard on grimoires— it caused mana to leak and weakened the book's control over the spells held inside.*

*Nearly all grimoires were handwritten. Proper restoration meant first determining the composition of the caster's original ink, and then matching it as closely as possible.*

*In places where important incantations had been interrupted, missing letters were restored with a pen made from the feather of a red owl.*

*Pipiri was known for her skill with old texts, but on this excursion, she had decided to give the younger Nanako the experience of making the most delicate repairs.*

NICE! LOOKING GOOD ...!

*Restoration was technical work requiring a great deal of experience.*

Hey! ...

...AS FOR ME...

NOW...

SFH..

WITH A COVER THIS BAD, THERE'S NO WAY IT'LL KEEP THE SPELL IN CHECK.

I'M GONNA HAVE TO PUT IN NEW STRAWBOARD.

*In typical restoration work, a cover so badly damaged would simply be discarded and replaced with another of similar design.*

*But a grimoire's cover was different. Often, blood or flecks of skin from the original caster had been worked into its material. A replacement wasn't likely to reestablish control.*

SHNK

*That meant ...*

*...the only choice was to carefully remove the cover's outer lining and reattach it to a new foundation.*

...to be worked carefully between the lining and original board.

SCRAPE..

...sharp knife...

...a small ...

SCRAPE..

Such work required...

SCRAPE..

SCRAPE..

SCRAPE..

There, there. Just a little longer now.

WHAT IS THIS WORLD THAT WE SEEK? WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE IT FOR OUR OWN?

TELL ME, MATEYS!

BUT NOT US.

NO BATTLE WON WILL BRING YE THE WORLD IN TRUTH.

SPENT EVERY MINUTE OF THEIR REIGNS IN BATTLE TO CONQUER THE LAND.

KINGS OF EVERY RACE HAVE SOUGHT THE SAME.

AND AS WE RECORD THE WORLD AS IT IS ...

...OUR SHIP SHALL COME TO HOLD A LIBRARY OF MAPS!

TO CROSS EVERY OCEAN!

TO LEAVE OUR FOOT-PRINTS ON EVERY PARCEL OF LAND!

NAY! WHAT WE SEEK IS TO KNOW! TO MAP OUT EVERY CORNER OF THE WORLD!

...IT WILL BE THE ADVENTURES I'VE HAD THAT MAKE IT MINE!

WHEN I, THE GREAT SHAGRAZZAT, CLAIM THE WORLD AS MY OWN...

...IN THIS PLACE I NOW STAND...

...AMONG THESE SHELVES ...

...ON THIS SHIP...

RIGHT HERE ...

...I SHALL BUILD THE WORLD!



blink...

1/10 ヤ...

I SHALL BUILD-

OH, I WAS SO WOR-RIED!

SAKI-YA ...?

HE'S AWAKE !

HEY!

!!

Mmm...

YEAH. I'M FINE ...

DO YOU FEEL ALL RIGHT ?!

ARE YOU OKAY ?!

WAIT! MISS FUMIS, NO!!

LIFT

FINE. YOU'RE RIGHT.

I'M SORRY.

PLEASE, DON'T SCOLD HIM NOW! HE JUST WOKE UP!

hff...

hff...

RUNNING INTO A BURNING BUILDING...

WHAT IF YOU DIED? WHO WOULD I LIVE FOR...?!

WHAT WERE YOU *THINK-ING?*

T-TIFA...?

*SHE NEVER GETS ANGRY!*

...

I'M SORRY I MADE YOU WORRY.

CLUTCH... hff...

BOUND

TH...

THAT'S BECAUSE I BOR-ROWED—

YOU WERE CLUTCHING IT SO TIGHTLY, I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER LET GO.

THE BOOK! IT'S HERE!

YOU'RE ALLOWED TO USE IT!

OH! THAT REMINDS ME!

YOU'RE ALLOWED TO BORROW BOOKS NOW!

THE LIBRARY!

murmur

murmur

murmur

murmur

I'VE CAUSED SO MUCH TROUBLE.

P- PLEASE ...

I'VE MADE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE, MISS KAFNA ...

NO WAY! I'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS!

NUH-UH!

YEAH, YOU DO!

HEY. YOU BE READY TO STOP HER IF SHE TAKES THIS TOO FAR.

LOUNGE

くーどーん

WHY, IF THAT BOY HAD BEEN BUT A MOMENT LATER, I'D...

...WELL, I'D...

LIBRARY CODE, ARTICLE FOUR...

SEETHE

SEETHE

"NO LIBRARY SHALL DISCRIMINATE AGAINST PATRONS ON THE BASIS OF RACE, GENDER, OR DISPARITY IN SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC STATUS."

YOUR ACTIONS ARE NOT JUST AN AFFRONT TO LIBRARIES ...

...BUT TO THE BOOKS THEM-SELVES !

BUT THE LIBRARY DOES NOT CHOOSE. IT LENDS TO ALL.

YES. THOSE WITH LIMITED MEANS ARE PRONE TO LACK UNDER-STANDING OF AND RESPECT TOWARD BOOKS.

TH- THOSE OF *MEAGER* SPIRIT ARE SO QUICK TO *STEAL* OR *MISTREAT* THE BOOKS!

B-B-B-B...

BUT, THE *POOR* ...

AND, WHEN YOU NEED TO, BRANDISH YOUR FIST THAT HE MAY LEARN! IT IS OUR *DUTY* TO ACT AS SUCH!!!

THEN PUT IT BACK IN A PLACE WHERE THE OFFENDER CAN FIND IT AGAIN!

IF ONE IS STOLEN, RECOVER IT!!

IF A BOOK IS DAMAGED, REPAIR IT!

TO DENY SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY, AND DRIVE *ANYONE* FROM THESE DOORS...

...IS *AN OUT-RAGE !!*

ANYWAY, DADDY DESERVED A GOOD SCOLDING!

HMPH!

AND...

...THE LIBRAR-IANS? WHERE ARE THEY NOW?!

I THINK THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO LEAVE THE VILLAGE BY SUNSET.

THEY SAID THEIR JOB HERE WAS DONE.

UM... LET'S SEE...

DASH

I'M SORRY !

I HAVE TO RETURN SOME-THING!

WHERE ARE YOU GOING ?!

WAIT!

I HAVE TO RETURN IT!

I HAVE TO RETURN IT!

HUH ?

I HAVE TO ...

CHECK IT OUT! IT'S LONG-EARS!

WHAT GIVES?! YOU'VE BEEN SKIPPIN' SCHOOL!

FWISH

HEY, LONG-EARS! WHAT'S THE HURRY?!

Where ya goin' ?!

TMP

TMP

TMP

LEMME SEE THAT!

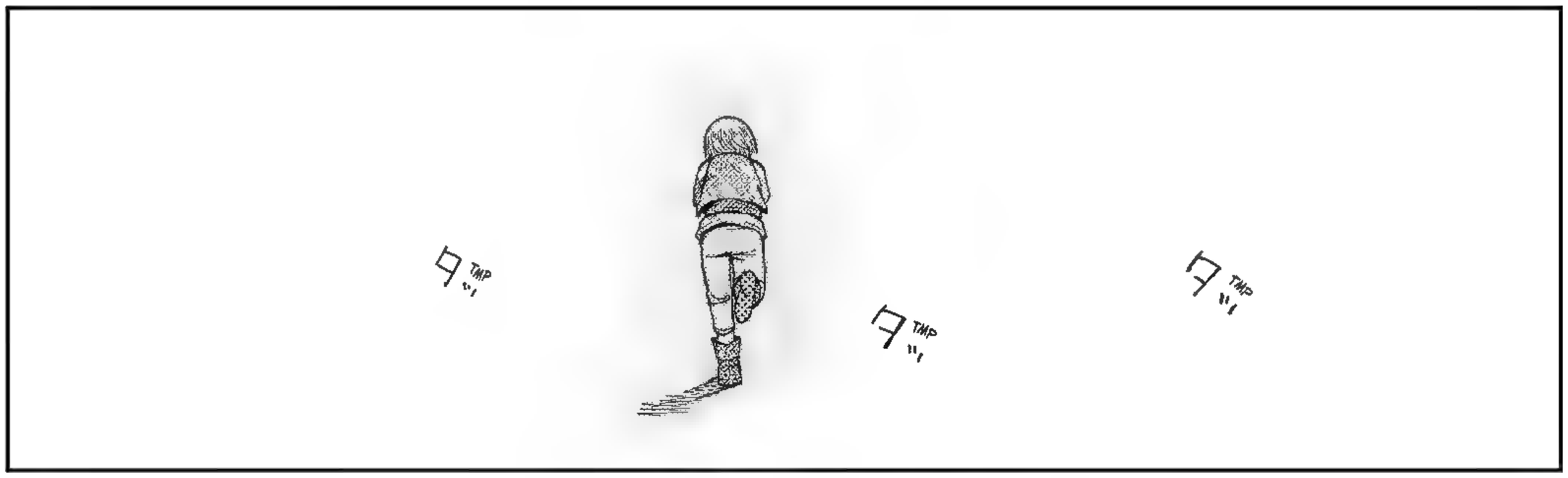
GRAB

DON'T THINK THINGS HAVE CHANGED JUST 'CAUSE THEY'RE LETTING YOU IN THE LIBRARY NOW!

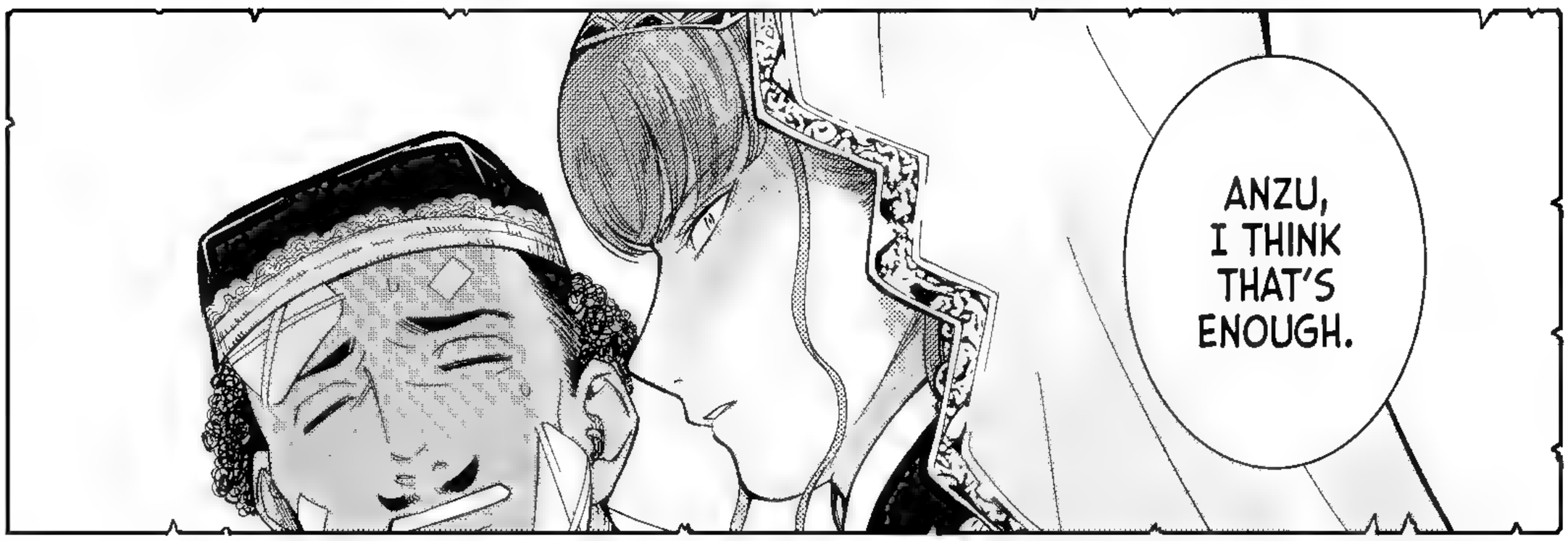
KRAKOOM

LOOK! HE'S GOT A BOOK!

HANDS OFF!!


SLUMP
SLUMP
SLUMP


MY EARS HURT ...
riiii...iing..
WHAT JUST HAPPENED ...?


ANZU, I THINK THAT'S ENOUGH.


DADDY ...
OSSEI ...
Nngr...


OH, MY ...
I SEEM TO HAVE LOST MY TEMPER. IT'S JUST THAT WHEN IT COMES TO BOOKS, I...


IT SHOULDN'T TAKE A RAISED VOICE TO DELIVER THE POINT.
THE MAN WAS SAVVY ENOUGH TO MAKE HIS FORTUNE AS A MERCHANT.

OH, DADDY...

ALL YOU USED TO TALK ABOUT WAS HAVING A FRIEND TO READ WITH...

SAKIYA, I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY, TOO.

I HAVE SO MANY THINGS TO APOLOGIZE TO HIM FOR...

TO THINK... MY LIFE SAVED BY THE LONG-EARED BOY...

O...

OF COURSE...

I WANT NOTHING MORE TO DO WITH GRIMOIRES...

I'LL RETURN YOUR MONEY. PLEASE, LET THEM TAKE THE GRIMOIRE BACK WITH THEM.

THE MORE VALUE IT HAS, THE MORE REASON TO SEE IT IN THE CARE OF THE CENTRAL LIBRARY.

BUT, PLEASE UNDER-STAND...

...THE REASON WE BUILD OUR LIBRARIES...

WE KNOW ALL TOO WELL HOW HARD IT IS TO UPHOLD OUR IDEALS WAY OUT HERE.

CARETAKER, PLEASE FORGIVE MY EARLIER OUTBURST.

*...AND SEND COPIES ACROSS THE LAND...*

*...THE REASON WE PROTECT THE BOOKS...*

*...THAT SOMEDAY...*

*...FROM AMONG THE YOUNG MINDS RAISED ON BOOKS FOUND AT THE LIBRARY...*

*...IS BECAUSE WE KAFNA HOPE...*

...A CHAMPION WILL APPEAR...

...TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF OUR WORLD.

A

A

I

W

T!

Sedona ?!

SEDONA ?!

WHIRL

HEY! WHY ARE WE TURNING AROUND ?!

CLIP

CLOP

BFF!

PERK

HERE...

THANKS FOR BEING KIND ENOUGH TO LEND ME THIS...

I MADE IT... *WHEW...*

WOBBLE

PANT

PANT

WOBBLE

NO ONE'S EVER LENT ME A BOOK BEFORE.

I REALLY APPRECI-ATED IT.

UM...

NO. NOT YET.

AND DID YOU FINISH READING IT?

BUT I'M AFRAID I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO GIVE THAT BACK WITHOUT READING IT.

THE CARETAKER TOLD ME WHAT HAPPENED.

HUH ...?

CONSIDER YOUR LOAN RENEWED.

AS LONG AS YOU CONTINUE TO LOVE BOOKS, I'M SURE WE'LL MEET AGAIN.

YOU CAN GIVE IT BACK TO ME THEN.

AND EVERY TIME I DID, IT GAVE ME STRENGTH.

WHENEVER LIFE FELT ROUGH, I READ BACK THROUGH IT.

THAT'S RIGHT. IT'S MY TREASURE.

BUT... WASN'T THIS BOOK REALLY IMPORTANT TO YOU?!

LISTEN TO ME. OUR VERY WORLD OWES ITSELF TO BOOKS— TO *TEXTS.*

EVEN THOSE UNABLE TO READ CANNOT LIVE APART FROM THE EFFECTS OF WRITING.

OTHERS BECOME LEADERS AND STIR PEOPLE TO ACTION.

SOME OF US COMPOSE NEW TEXTS OF OUR OWN.

SOMETIMES, THOSE IDEAS RESONATE WITH US. OTHER TIMES, WE REBEL AGAINST THEM.

COUNTLESS AMONG US HAVE LEARNED OF THE IDEAS OF THE PAST FROM THESE TEXTS.

...BUT EVER SINCE THEN, THE TABLES HAVE TURNED.

THE FIRST TEXT MAY HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY A PERSON ...

TEXTS BUILD THE WORLD WE LIVE IN TODAY.

TEXTS MAKE PEOPLE.

...ALONG WITH THE TRUTH ABOUT THE WORLD THAT CAN BE FOUND AMONG THOSE PAGES.

IT WON'T TAKE SOMEONE LIKE YOU LONG TO GRASP THE FULL MEAN-ING OF THOSE WORDS...

PROTECT-ING A BOOK...

...IS LIKE PROTECT-ING THE WORLD.

KNEEL.

I *HATE* THIS WORLD I LIVE IN, YOU KNOW ...

I...

IS THIS REALLY IT...?

ARE YOU REALLY LEAVING ME...?

I HATE THAT I MAKE MY SISTER'S LIFE HARDER!

AND MOST OF ALL, I *HATE* HOW I'M NOT ABLE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!

I HATE MY STUPID EARS THAT MAKE ME DIFFER-ENT!

I HATE HAVING DIFFERENT SKIN AND DIFFERENT HAIR!

I HATE MY CLASS-MATES AT SCHOOL.

I HATE THE GROWN-UPS WHO REFUSE TO HELP ME.

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR A HERO!

*...THE HERO I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR?*

*AREN'T YOU...*

THAT'S WHY...

...I'VE BEEN...

*THE ONE THAT WILL TAKE ME AWAY FROM THIS WORLD ?!*

TELL ME! WHEN ...

...IS *MY* HERO GONNA COME ?!

NOT FOR YOU. NOT FOR …

… ANY-ONE.

THERE WILL BE NO HERO.

YOU KNOW WHY NOT ?

BECAUSE THE THINGS YOU SEE IN LIFE ARE YOURS AND YOURS ALONE. NO MATTER WHERE OTHERS LOOK, THEY CANNOT SEE WHAT YOU SEE.

…WHAT TO CALL THE ONE WHO DROVE THIS STORY.

YOU NEVER GAVE YOUR NAME, AND I NEVER PRESSED FOR IT. BUT I'D LIKE TO KNOW…

YOU HAVE A NAME OF YOUR OWN THAT YOU MUST WEAR PROUDLY.

IT'S NOT "LONG-EARS."

SFFF

THEO FUMIS !

IT'S THEO ...!

AT TIMES, YOU MAY WANT TO LOOK AWAY.

BUT ...

...YOU MUSTN'T FORGET!

WHAT SCENES WILL APPEAR ON THE PAGES SPREAD BEFORE YOU?

A TALE OF ADVENTURE THAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO SPIN!!

THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW EPIC!!

...THAT CAN TURN THE PAGE.

YOURS IS THE ONLY HAND...

CHANGE THE WORLD !!!

THEO !!

DRIVE THE STORY YOUR-SELF !!

YOU ARE THE HERO !

# Magus of the Library

LET US MEET AGAIN ...

...MY NEW ADVEN-TURER FRIEND !

UNTIL THEN, FARE THEE WELL !

HFF?

MY! I THINK IT'S A LOVELY PROMISE!

SERI-OUSLY? "FARE THEE WELL"?

BRRP!

HEH HEH.

STILL CAN'T LET GO OF THE DRAMATICS, HUH?

IF NOW'S NOT THE TIME FOR DRAMATICS, WHEN IS?

A NEW TALE IS ABOUT TO UNFOLD.



TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP

*Seven years later...*

LEAP!!!



*Theo Fumis*

*Age 13*

TMP
SORRY! PARDON ME!
THP
DAZE
THUMP
TH-THUMP
HEY, THEO! SHOULDN'T YOU BE HEADING OUT SOON?! WOULDN'T WANT TO BE LATE!
I WON'T!
phew!
HERE WE GO!
WHOO!
Whoa!

THANKS, DAEM!

SNAP

HEY! CATCH!

A LITTLE GOING-AWAY GIFT. FIND SOMETHING GOOD TO EAT ON THE WAY.

I STILL GOTTA RETURN MY LIBRARY BOOK!

TURNS OUT...

...YOU REALLY DID GET TO ALMOST EVERY BOOK WE HAVE.

I GUESS THIS LITTLE LIBRARY CAN'T KEEP YOU HERE ANYMORE, CAN IT?

TRAVEL SAFELY, THEO.

HEY, THEO!

HEY, MS. HUKI! LET ME HELP WITH THAT. I'M GOING PAST YOUR PLACE ANYWAY.

OH, YOU'RE SUCH A DEAR, THEO.

HEY, THEO! FINALLY OFF, HUH ?!

I'M REALLY DOING IT!

SORRY, GUYS! I'M GONNA BE GONE FOR A WHILE!

YOU GONNA READ TO US TODAY ?

TEST ?! WHAT TEST ?!

TO TAKE THE TEST !

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TO BECOME A KAFNA!

AH! YOU MADE IT.

AFTZAAK, HERE I COME!

WOO-HOO

HAH! DON'T CELEBRATE JUST YET. THE JOURNEY TO AFTZAAK IS A LONG ONE.

IT'S FINALLY HAPPEN-ING!

YES, YES.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR TAKING ME.

The Legend of the Great Magus—

Thus, peace was restored to the land...

...or so the magi believed.

Seven talented magi rose up against the calamity ...

...and at the end of a long, grueling battle, they managed to seal the Emissary away in a sarcophagus made of stone.

Long, long ago, a calamity known as the Emissary of Wormwood swept across the continent.

For the calamity had left behind a fog that came to be called the Ashen Death. It covered up great swaths of land, rendering them uninhabitable.

Wherever it went, the Emissary brought great destruction and thrust the people into panic.

*To ensure their control over the world, the victors stamped out the cultures, histories, and languages of the conquered races.*

*Next came an age of war, the different races of the world vying for control of the remaining land.*

*MANY TEXTS WERE DESTROYED.*

*"We must protect the thoughts of our ancestors."*

*And one offered weakly in reply...*

*"What is this world we offered our lives to protect?"*

*The brave magi lamented ...*

*...the Magus of the Library.*

*And through his labor, he came to be known as...*

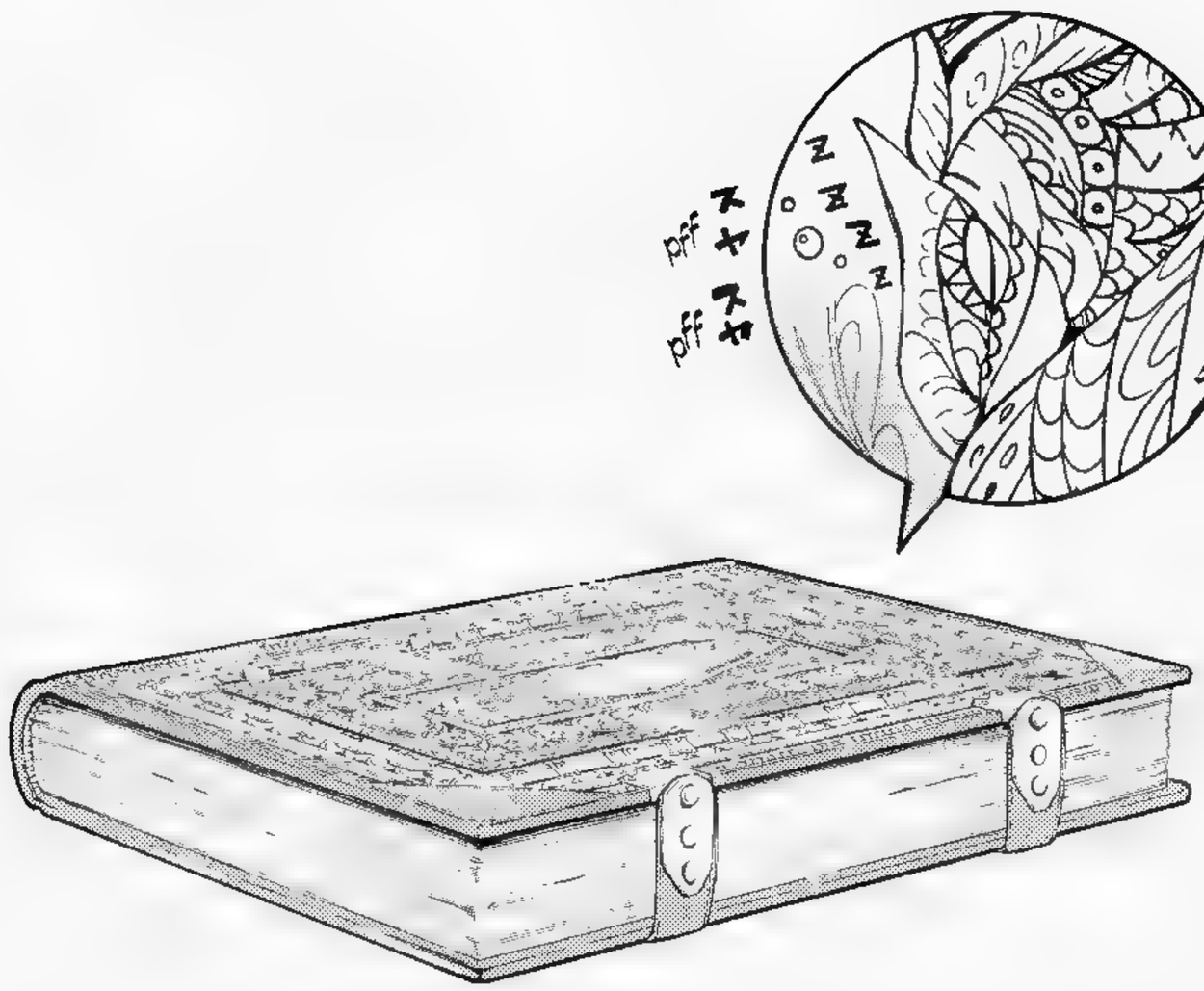
*...and all memories left behind by all the peoples of the world.*

*That magus constructed a great hall in which to preserve all texts...*

*And now, a certain youth departs from his village, unknowingly destined to play a great part in the struggle against a danger set to threaten the world once more.*

*Some 95 years have passed since the fighting ceased.*


His name is Theo Fumis.
And this...
...is a story of the power of books to connect the world.




To be continued.



## THE ADVENTURES OF SHAGRAZZAT

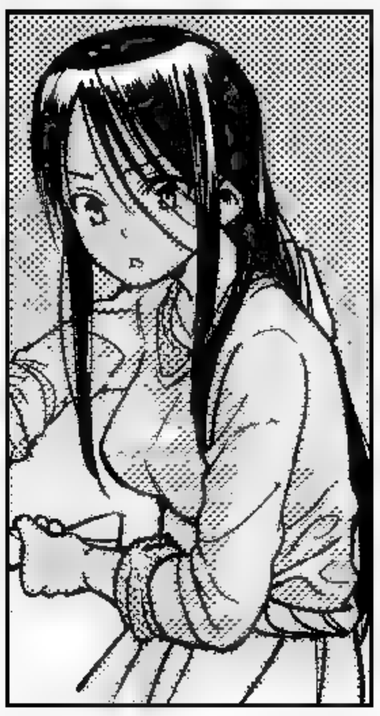
A series of adventure novels set among the high seas. It tells the story of the pirate captain Shagrazzat and his quest to claim the world for his own. Traveling with him is an eclectic crew composed of peoples from every land he visits. In Theo's world, a great, sweeping fog known as the "Ashen Death" has rendered the seas unnavigable. The fog set in sometime after the arrival of the Emissary of Wormwood, and because of it, those born following the Great War have never witnessed the ocean with their own eyes. The mystique of the sea is one factor driving the immense popularity of these oceangoing tales.

However, the Central Library also conspires to see Shagrazzat widely read: Hoping to ease tension between the races, the Library has carefully selected this tale of different peoples working together to overcome their difficulties. The librarians use it as a primary text in promoting intercultural harmony and in forming good reading habits among young minds.



## THE TONA TREE

A grand tree towering above the Village of Amun. It is said to have long ago protected the land nearby from the Emissary of Wormwood. The mana bursting forth from its branches has greatly affected Theo over his many hours spent playing nearby.

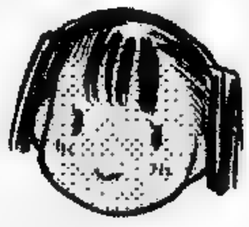


**TIFA FUMIS** *AGE 15*

Tifa arrived in Amun six years ago, at the end of an arduous journey. She is regarded by the villagers as a strange young woman who dedicates herself to the care of a half-blood boy.



**THEO FUMIS**
*AGE 6*



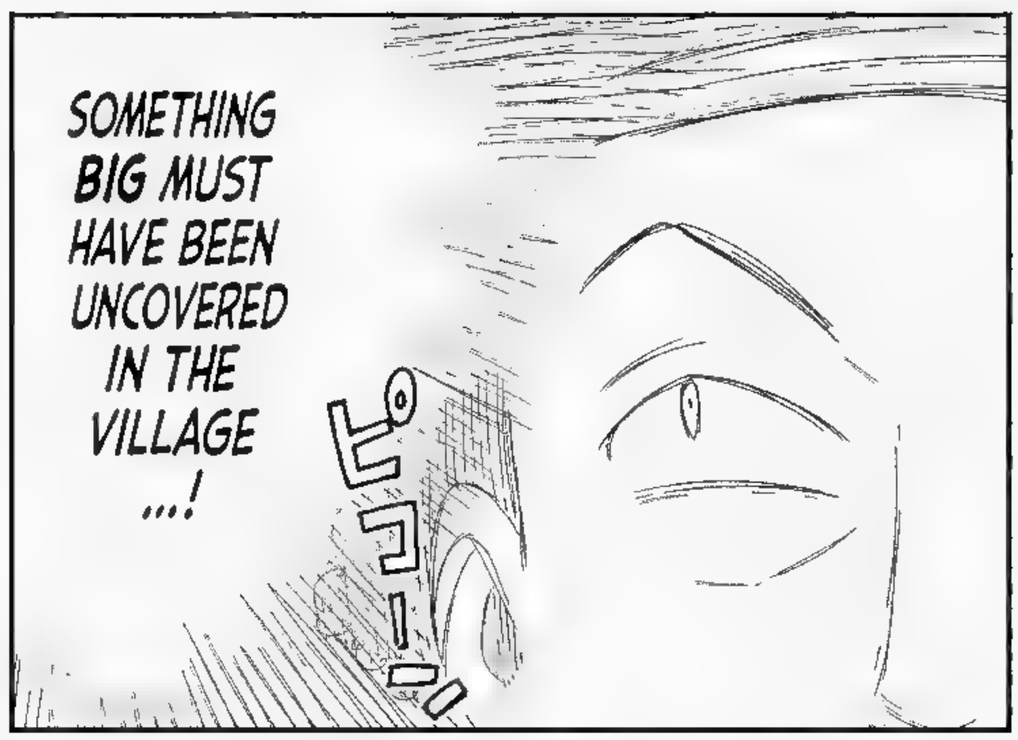
**SAKIYA MENES**
*AGE 7*

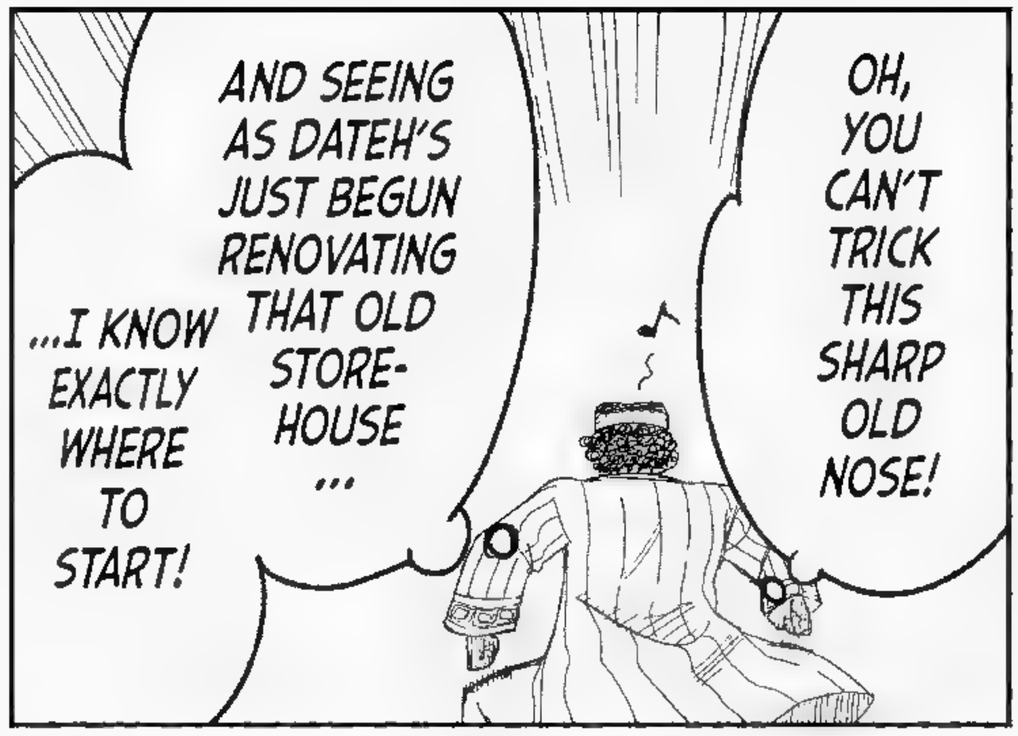
### *PRIOR TO THE VISIT*









Longer *lipine* (decorative head coverings) indicate higher ranks.



-◈ ENDBAND ◈-



-◈ SPINE ◈-

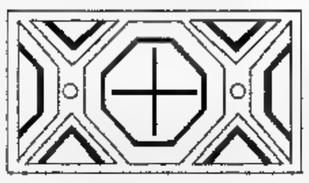


-◈ EDGE ◈-



-◈ CORNER ◈-

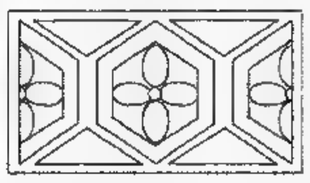
Patterned crests on the *kaachni* (decorative bands worn across the forehead) indicate assigned office.



Restorations Office



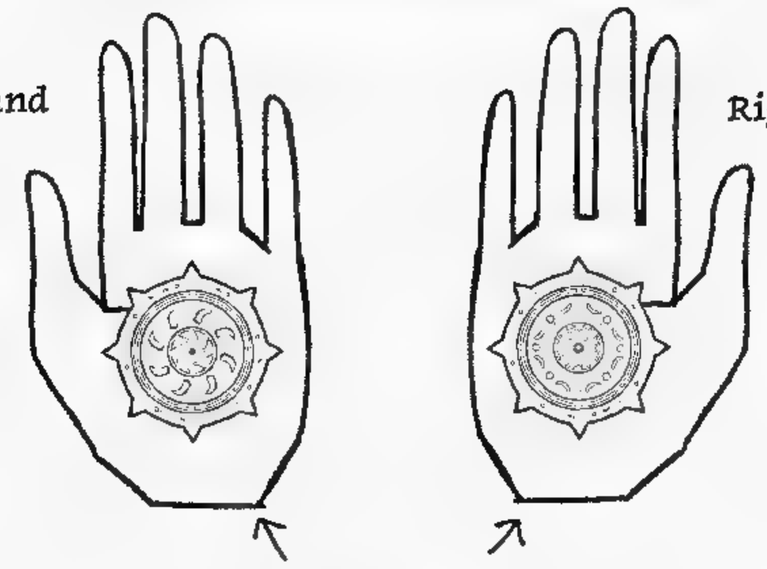
Liaisons Office



Protections Office

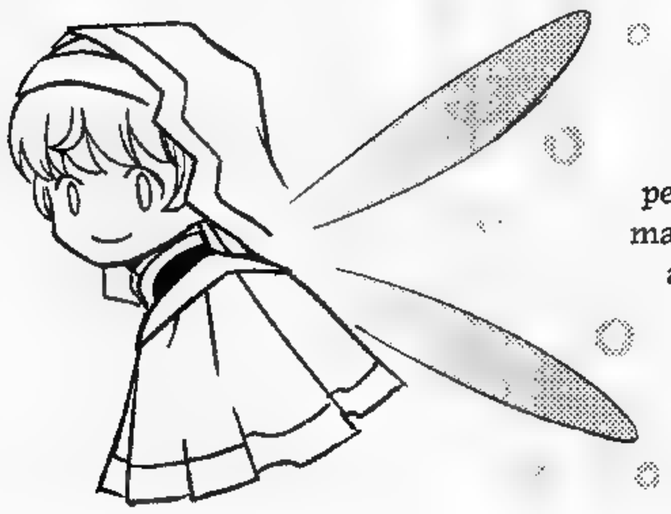
## -◈ SEDONA'S SPELL SEALS ◈-

Left Hand



Right Hand

Tattooed onto the palms



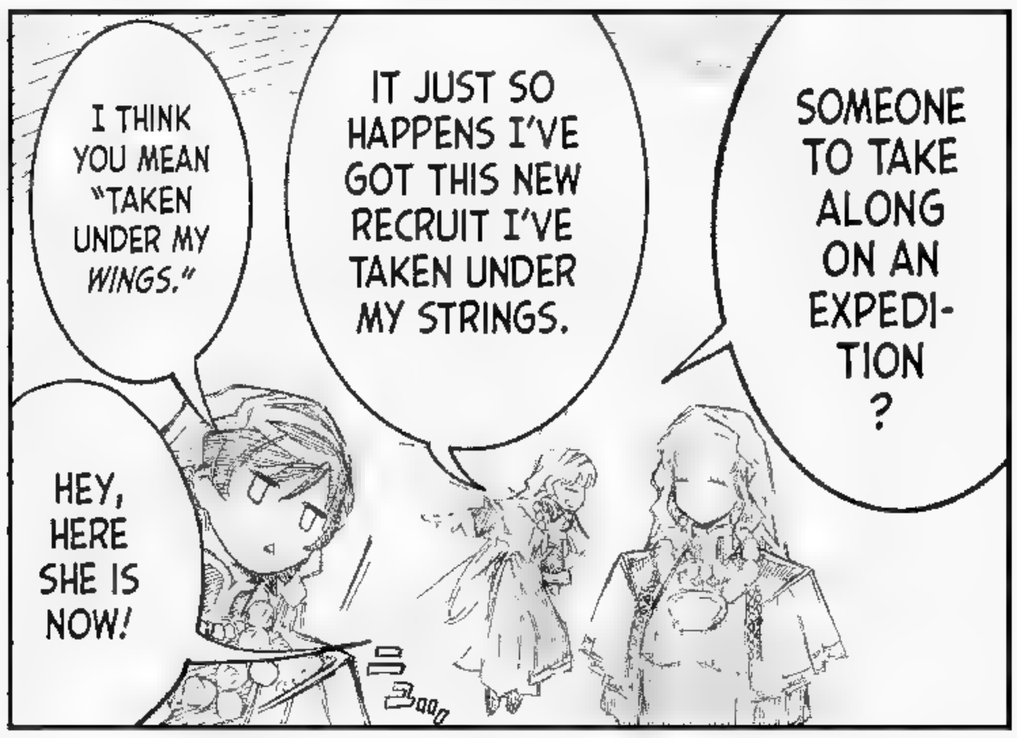
The wings of the *Kokopa* people are tangible slivers of mana; they can be manifested and extinguished at will.

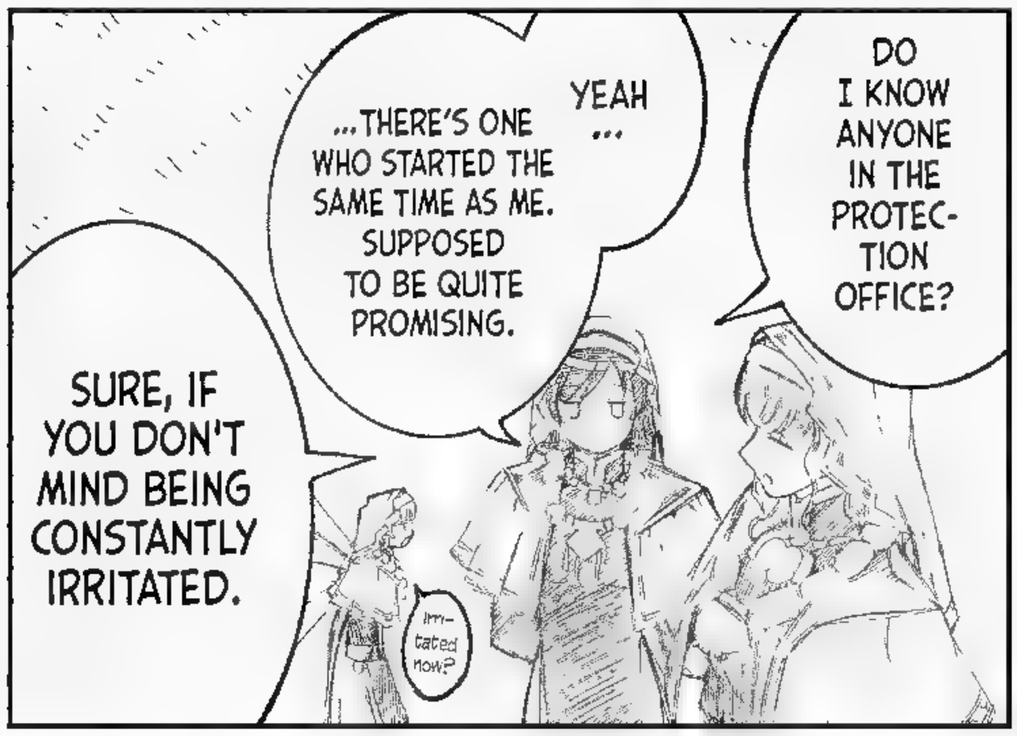
## *PREPARING FOR DEPARTURE*











KAMOME SHIRAHAMA

# Witch Hat Atelier

**A magical manga adventure for fans of Disney and Studio Ghibli!**

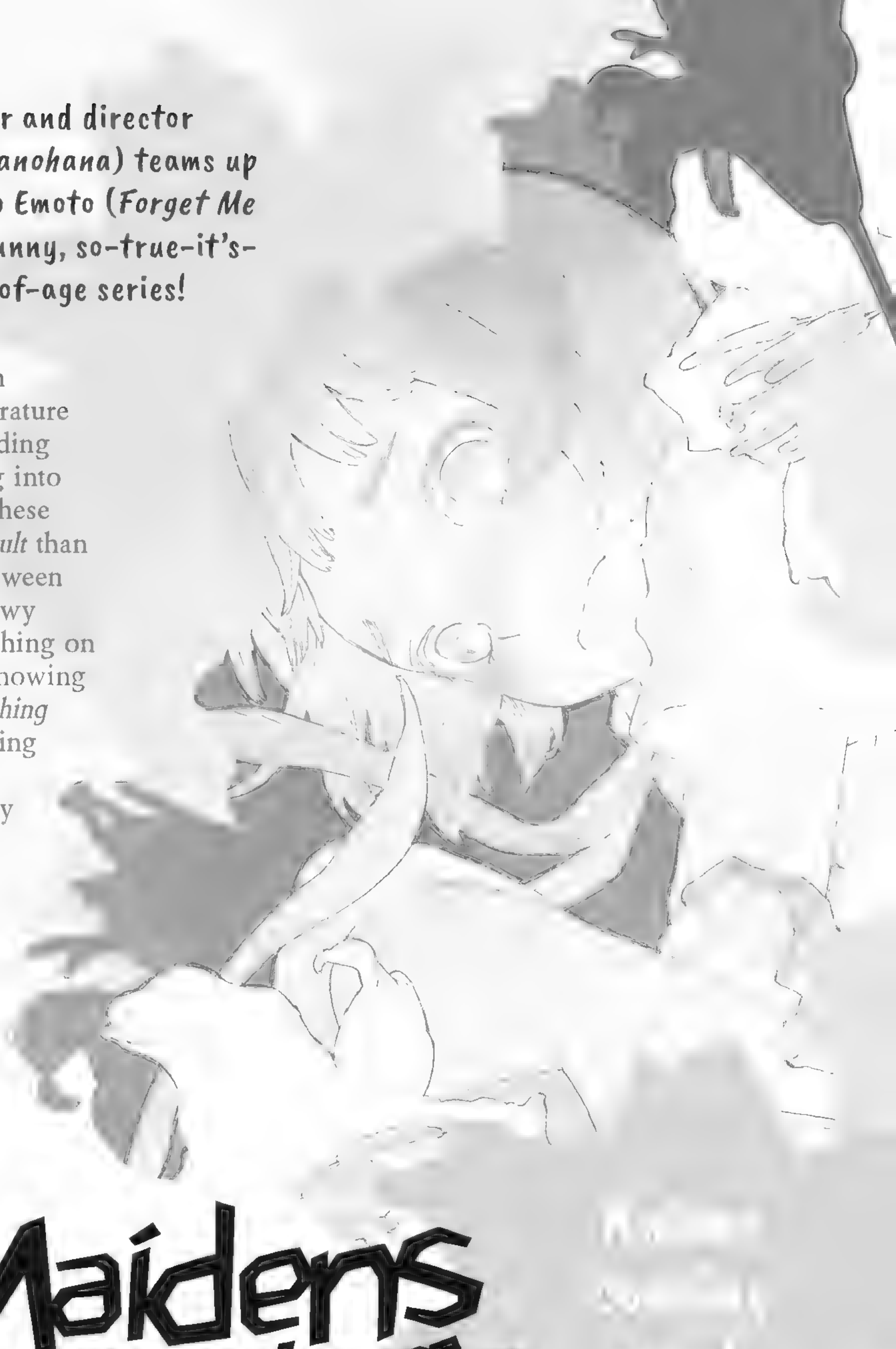
## The magical adventure that took Japan by storm is finally here, from acclaimed DC and Marvel cover artist Kamome Shirahama!

In a world where everyone takes wonders like magic spells and dragons for granted, Coco is a girl with a simple dream: She wants to be a witch. But everybody knows magicians are born, not made, and Coco was not born with a gift for magic. Resigned to her un-magical life, Coco is about to give up on her dream to become a witch…until the day she meets Qifrey, a mysterious, traveling magician. After secretly seeing Qifrey perform magic in a way she's never seen before, Coco soon learns what everybody "knows" might not be the truth, and discovers that her magical dream may not be as far away as it may seem…

KC KODANSHA COMICS

**Acclaimed screenwriter and director Mari Okada (*Maquia, anohana*) teams up with manga artist Nao Emoto (*Forget Me Not*) in this moving, funny, so-true-it's-embarrassing coming-of-age series!**

When Kazusa enters high school, she joins the Literature Club, and leaps from reading innocent fiction to diving into the literary classics. But these novels are a bit more...*adult* than she was prepared for. Between euphemisms like fresh dewy grass and pork stew, crushing on the boy next door, and knowing you want to do that *one thing* before you die—discovering your budding sexuality is no easy feat! As if puberty wasn't awkward enough, the club consists of a brooding writer, the prettiest girl in school, an agreeable comrade, and an outspoken prude. Fumbling over their own discomforts, these five teens get thrown into chaos over three little letters: *S...E...X...!*



# Maidens in your Savage Season

Mari Okada  Nao Emoto

KC KODANSHA COMICS

**A dark and sexy body-horror action manga perfect for fans of *Prison School* and *High School of the Dead*!**

Shuichi Kagaya is a smart kid, and most smart kids his age would be thinking about college. Shuichi is also a monster, and he's smart enough to know that monsters don't go to college. But after he uses his monstrous form to save his classmate Claire Aoki, it doesn't matter what his plans for the future were, because he's not the one making the decisions anymore. Now that the seductive, sadistic Claire knows Shuichi's secret, she's got her own ideas about what a monster is good for—because he's not the first monster she's met...

KC
KODANSHA COMICS

# GLEIPNIR

Gleipnir © Sun Takeda/Kodansha Ltd

**"You and me together...we would be unstoppable."**

THE HIGH SCHOOL HAREM COMEDY WITH FIVE TIMES THE CUTE GIRLS!

"An entertaining romantic-comedy with a snarky edge to it." —Taykobon



Futaro Uesugi is a second-year in high school, scraping to get by and pay off his family's debt. The only thing he can do is study, so when Futaro receives a part-time job offer to tutor the five daughters of a wealthy businessman, he can't pass it up. Little does he know, these five beautiful sisters are quintuplets, but the only thing they have in common...is that they're all terrible at studying!

# THE QUINTESSENTIAL QUINTUPLETS

negi haruba

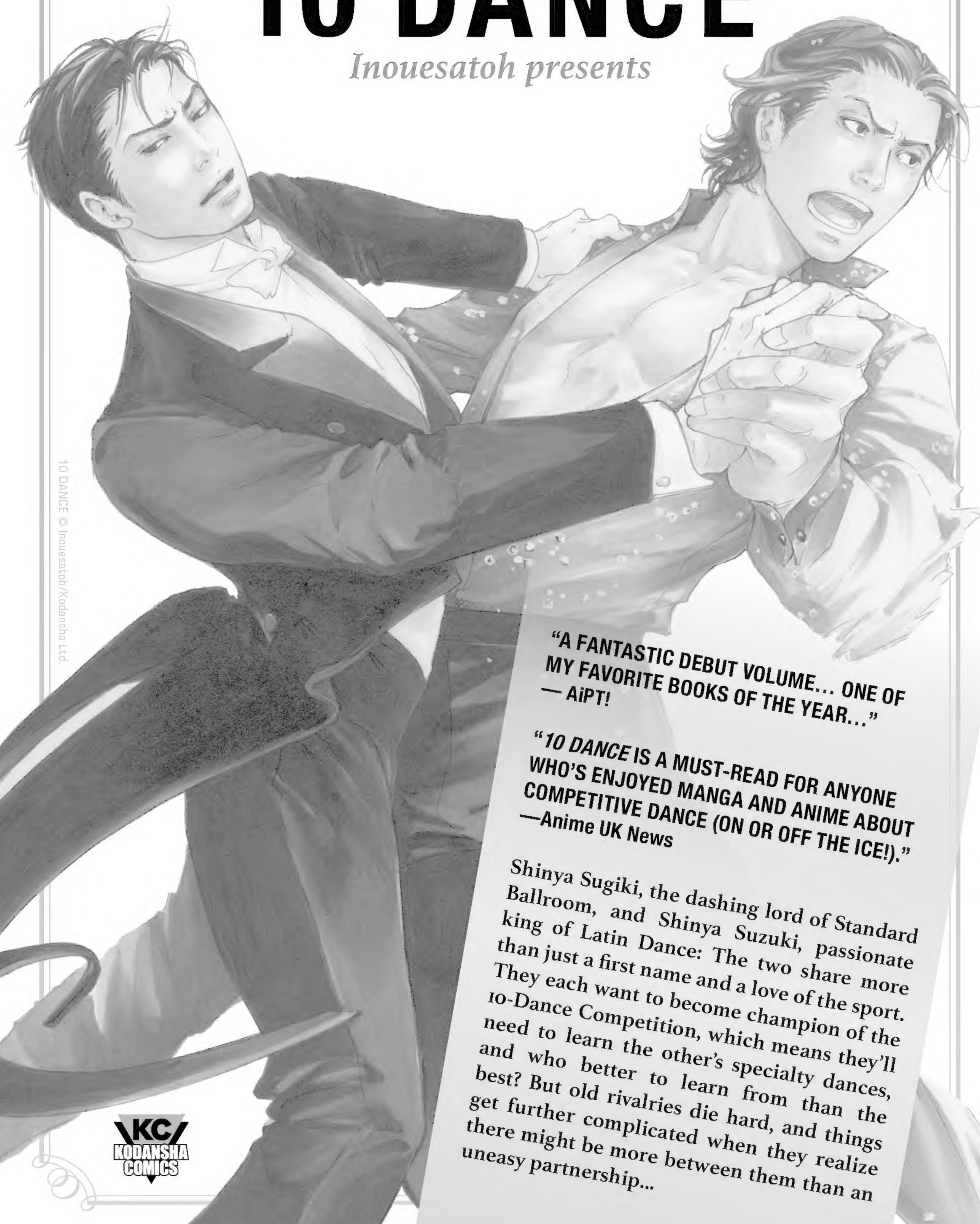
ANIME OUT NOW!

KC KODANSHA COMICS

The slow-burn queer romance that'll sweep you off your feet!

# 10 DANCE

*Inouesatoh presents*



10 DANCE © Inouesatoh/Kodansha Ltd.

**"A FANTASTIC DEBUT VOLUME... ONE OF MY FAVORITE BOOKS OF THE YEAR..."**
**— AiPT!**

**"*10 DANCE* IS A MUST-READ FOR ANYONE WHO'S ENJOYED MANGA AND ANIME ABOUT COMPETITIVE DANCE (ON OR OFF THE ICE!)."**
**—Anime UK News**

Shinya Sugiki, the dashing lord of Standard Ballroom, and Shinya Suzuki, passionate king of Latin Dance: The two share more than just a first name and a love of the sport. They each want to become champion of the 10-Dance Competition, which means they'll need to learn the other's specialty dances, and who better to learn from than the best? But old rivalries die hard, and things get further complicated when they realize there might be more between them than an uneasy partnership...

KC KODANSHA COMICS

# Yuri Is My Job!

**miman**

**JOIN US FOR AFTERNOON TEA WITH EQUAL PARTS YURI, ROM-COM, AND DRAMA!**



Yuri is My Job! © Miman/Ichijinsha Inc.

**Hime is a picture-perfect high school princess, so when she accidentally injures a café manager named Mai, she's willing to cover some shifts to keep her façade intact. To Hime's surprise, the café is themed after a private school where the all-female staff always puts on their best act for their loyal customers. However, under the guidance of the most graceful girl there, Hime can't help but blush and blunder! Beneath all the frills and laughter, Hime feels tension brewing as she finds out more about her new job and her budding feelings...**

KC KODANSHA COMICS

**"A quirky, fun comedy series... If you're a yuri fan, or perhaps interested in getting into it but not sure where to start, this book is worth picking up."**
**— Anime UK News**

**Magus of the Library**

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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